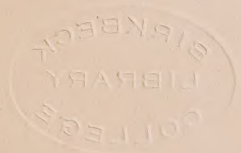







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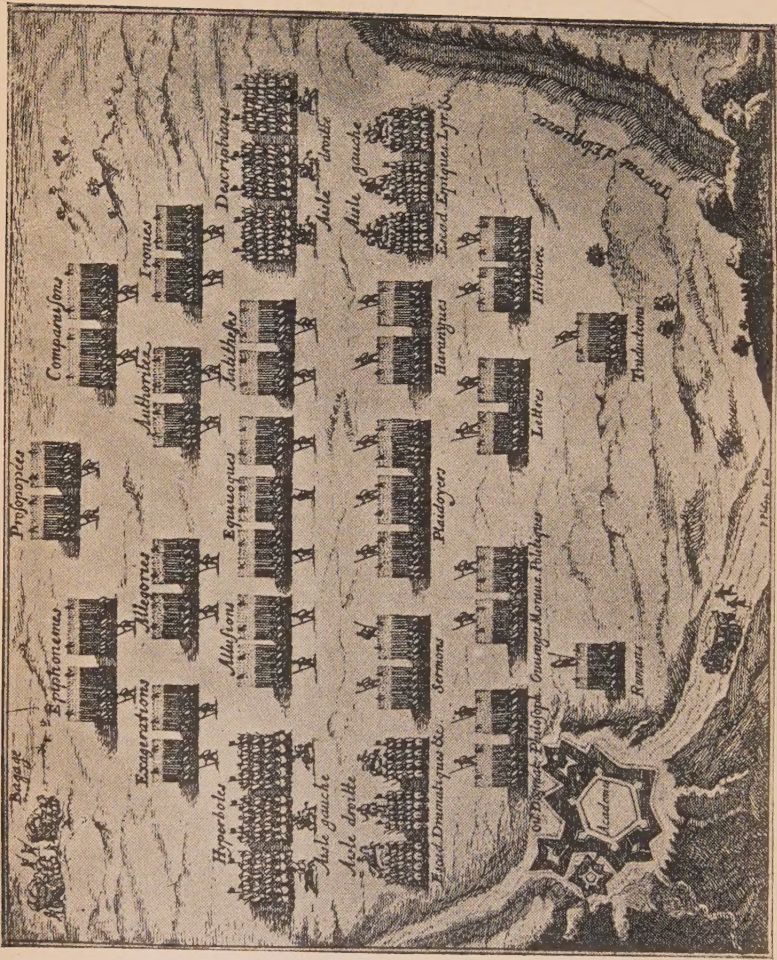








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THE BATTLE-GROUND OF SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY CRITICISM

(See p. xxviii, note)

# Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century

Vol. I  
1605-1650

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Edited by

J. E. Spingarn

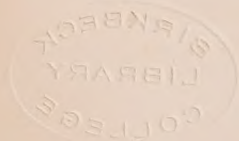
Adjunct Professor of Comparative Literature  
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WITHDRAWN

Oxford  
At the Clarendon Press  
1908



HENRY FROWDE, M.A.  
PUBLISHER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD  
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## PREFACE

THE aim of this work is to collect all the material (save the writings of Dryden) necessary for a thorough study of the development of English criticism in the seventeenth century, and to make this development more intelligible by annotation and comment. The collection begins where Professor Gregory Smith's *Elizabethan Critical Essays* left off; and Professor Ker's edition of the *Essays of Dryden* would make the inclusion of these a work of supererogation. The omission of the chief critic of the century may suggest an obvious analogy to *Hamlet* without the protagonist who gives it its name. But the attention of scholars has been centred too exclusively on this highly significant figure; he has overshadowed a considerable number of men whose work cannot be ignored without a loss of historical perspective. Their presence in this collection gives each an added significance as a link in the chain of English criticism, and the new light which is shed on its history by their collocation would justify their editor against the charge that he has edited three volumes of Nobody 'On Nothing', even if Bacon and Jonson and Milton did not bear them company. The Restoration and the Revolution of 1688 disappear as cataclysms turning the domain of criticism and literary taste



topsy-turvy, when these authors are studied in the mass and in the order in which they appear in this work. The date of Dryden's death has been selected as a fitting close, but it is idle to represent even this as other than a more or less arbitrary choice.

All the texts, with the exception of those in the appendices, have been transcribed from the originals, without any alterations beyond the correction of obvious misprints and the revision of the punctuation in the direction of clarity and order ; but a few editorial emendations have been admitted, and duly pointed out in the notes. My own interests as a scholar happen to lie chiefly in the syntheses of literary history, rather than in the textual or philological studies which are its servants. But an unfaithful servant may play havoc with any household, and here, as drudge no less than as master, I have attempted to give that scrupulous adequacy of text which must be the basis of all the higher researches and speculations of literary scholarship. My aim has been to include complete texts only ; but in a few instances, such as in the case of treatises too large and not sufficiently significant to include as wholes, and especially in the case of important *loci* in works not wholly critical in their nature, I have been obliged to restrict myself to chapters, sections, or passages complete in themselves. It is obvious that the trend of criticism is often greatly influenced by books of this latter sort, and the *dicta* they contain often form part and parcel of its history. The somewhat more fragmentary character of the texts in the first volume is not accidental or arbitrary ; it is highly significant in

itself, and is conditioned by the spirit and the methods of Jacobean and early Caroline criticism. On the other hand, the selection of the texts must be determined to some extent by my own conception of the critical development of the century, and this I have given in summary fashion in the general Introduction. The admirable work of Dr. Hamelius, Signor Benedetto Croce, Professor Saintsbury, Professors Gayley and Scott, M. Bourgoïn, M. Brunetière, and others, has by no means exhausted the fruitful field of seventeenth-century criticism. In the notes I have tried, by rigid compression and the exclusion, so far as possible, of philological and antiquarian detail, to give such information only as will be of service to the student of the history of criticism; but in such things, only 'marginal stuffings' and not 'unlearned drudgery'<sup>1</sup> can be avoided. The third volume will contain an index.

In the prosecution of my work I have been under special obligations to my brother, Mr. A. B. Spingarn, who has continually placed at my service the stores of his bibliographical knowledge, and to Mr. W. B. Owen, who has assisted me throughout in the collation of the proof-sheets and in other ways. I am also indebted for incidental assistance to Mr. Sidney Lee, Mr. Frederic Harrison, Dr. J. E. Sandys, Professor G. Gregory Smith, Mr. W. J. Courthope, Mr. Ferris Greenslet, M. Charles Bastide, Señor D. Adolfo Bonilla y San Martín, Professor Arturo

<sup>1</sup> i. 200.

Farinelli, Mr. Alain C. White, and Miss Carolyn Shipman, as well as to a considerable number of my Columbia colleagues. I should also like to thank Mr. Robert Hoe, Dr. C. M. Hathaway, and Mr. J. O. Wright for the use of books. The secretaries and readers of the Clarendon Press, and the officials of the Columbia University Library, especially Mr. Erb, have rendered much courteous assistance; the officials of the English and Continental libraries in which I have worked have granted me the usual formal permission to consult their treasures.

J. E. S.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY,  
*September, 1907.*

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P. 141, l. 6, for 1633 ? read 1632.



## INTRODUCTION

FORMAL criticism in modern Europe has its origins in the Italy of the later Renaissance, where the discussion of literary problems was merely one phase of that intellectual casuistry which arose out of the Catholic Reaction. On the basis of an ancient literary heritage the Italians developed a definite outlook on literature, a body of rules and theories, and the tentative beginnings of a critical method. They introduced the England of Sidney's age to the formal study of literature, and English criticism began. How these materials were altered to the needs of English taste, how ancient rule was adapted to modern practice, in a word, how the critical spirit of Sidney and Puttenham was transmuted into that of Dryden, Rymer, and Temple, is the subject of this inquiry.

### I. THE JACOBEOAN OUTLOOK: BACON AND JONSON

Bacon and Jonson are the representative critics of the Jacobean period. Both alike inherited the traditions of Elizabethan culture, and modified or transformed them. The imaginative element in Sidney's theory of poetry was carried on by Bacon, who added historic and scientific factors not in the Elizabethan scheme. The classical side of Sidney's theory was developed by Jonson, who gave a new and increased prestige to the rules formulated by the Italians, and shifted the interest of criticism to the external and objective side of literary art.

Bacon touches the subject of criticism but lightly, yet his utterances have a high significance in its history. His judgements of concrete literature are casual and few in

number; perhaps the most important is that on the Ciceronian imitators of the Renaissance, in whom he condemns an excessive attention to the externals of style.<sup>1</sup> His conception of literary history, which he assigns to a place of highest dignity among the historical sciences, is more important:<sup>2</sup> he conceives of its method as a synthesis based on historical research,—not like critics to blame or to praise, but to represent things as they are,—and its purpose is to discover the relations of literary activity with the political and religious life in which it has its source, and to aim at a final portrayal of the genius of each age in the development of letters.

Underlying these utterances is a general classification of the arts and sciences, according to the three divisions of the mind inherited from the traditional psychology: history is referred to the memory, philosophy to the understanding, and poetry to the imagination. This is virtually the classification of the Spaniard Huarte, which had been adopted by Charron.<sup>3</sup> The imagination itself, as a mental process, had already impelled curiosity in classical antiquity; and the Italians of the Renaissance, from the time of Pico della Mirandola (whose treatise *De Imaginatione* was translated into French by Baïf in 1557), had devoted special monographs to the subject. But their interest was, for the most part, in the pathology of the imagination: they conceived of it primarily as a source of physical or mental aberration, alike in the poet, the lunatic, and the lover; Burton illustrates this point of view in England, and the number of continental authorities cited by him indicates the diffusion of the interest among his predecessors and contemporaries.<sup>4</sup> This explains in part the suspicion of the

<sup>1</sup> i. 2 sq.

<sup>2</sup> i. 4 sq., and especially *De Augmentis*, ii. 4.

<sup>3</sup> See note to i. 4. 10–13.

<sup>4</sup> *Anatomy of Melancholy*, pt. i, sect. 2, mem. 3, subs. 2. Cf. Henry More, *Philos. Writings*, ed. 1712, pp. 6, 14; Fulke Greville, ed. Grosart, i. 9–11, iv. 222; Gregory Smith, ii. 19–20.

imagination during the seventeenth century:<sup>1</sup> the madness which, sympathetically or unsympathetically, was associated with the poet by Plato and Aristotle, by Drayton and Dryden, was referred especially to it, making it appear the abnormal side, rather than the creative force, of poetry. Bacon, however, connects it definitely with the latter function, and frankly adopts the place given to it in Huarte's scheme.

Aristotle had defined poetry as an imitation of life, using the term, not in the sense of a mere copy, but of a generalized representation of reality: 'It is not the function of the poet to relate what has happened, but what may happen, what is possible according to the laws of probability or necessity . . . Poetry tends to express the universal; history, the particular.'<sup>2</sup> Bacon uses the term 'imagination' to indicate the mental process which transforms the prosaic 'what has happened' into the poetic 'what may or should happen'. The purpose of poetry is 'to giue some shadowe of satisfaction to the minde of Man in those points wherein the Nature of things doth denie it . . . by submitting the shewes of things to the desires of the Mind'.<sup>3</sup> Bacon and Aristotle, therefore, do not differ in their conception of poetry. Bacon has given a name to the idealizing process of the Aristotelian imitation, has connected this process with a particular division of the mind. They do differ, however, in their conceptions of the source or origin of poetry. The desire to reproduce actual life is for Aristotle one of the fundamental sources; for Bacon, it is man's dissatisfaction with actual life, and his desire to transmute it into forms more satisfactory to the mind. Here Aristotle is less consistent, or at least less clear, than Bacon.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Malebranche, *Recherche de la Vérité*, bk. ii. A history of this subject, more intimately touching letters than Ambrosi's *La Psicologia dell' Immaginazione nella Storia della Filosofia*, Rome, 1898, is still to be written.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* ix. 1, 3.

<sup>3</sup> i. 6.

Poetry differs from history and philosophy, then, according to Bacon, in that these reflect the external world without change; poetry reflects the world, but transforms it through the imagination, whether the events of life are narrated as past in the epic, represented as present action in the drama, or allegorized under symbolic forms in what Bacon calls 'parabolic' poetry. In all these three divisions of the art (he recognizes no others) poetry limits itself to a heightened portrayal of the outer world. Bacon does not recognize those forms which reflect the inner soul of man; satires, elegies, sonnets, and all other lyrical forms seem to him to belong rather to the domain of philosophy or rhetoric.<sup>1</sup> If in this he clearly foreshadows the neo-classical indifference to lyric poetry, his treatment of 'parabolic' poetry illustrates tendencies both sympathetic and unsympathetic to the new movement. His interest in it is scientific or philosophic rather than aesthetic: it appeals to the reason as well as to the imagination; it approaches more closely than the other forms to science; for him, therefore, it is the supreme form of poetry.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, his interest in the mysteries of allegorical interpretation is a mediaeval survival, reinforced by the subtler speculations of the Renaissance. In the *Wisdom of the Ancients*, and elsewhere, he opened the way for a series of successors, of whom Henry Reynolds and Alexander Ross are the most important literary, and Henry More perhaps the most important philosophical, examples.

The objective and imaginative side of Bacon's theory connects him with Elizabethan literature, especially with the drama, of which his is the most significant critical expression. He recognized the 'power of the theatre, explaining it on the principle, as it is now called, of the 'psychology of the crowd'.<sup>3</sup> His classification of the lyric

<sup>1</sup> *De Aug.* ii. 13.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Cf. note to i. 6. 30.

with philosophy and rhetoric explains the impersonal and imitative forms of lyric poetry at the end of the sixteenth century, and looks forward to the more complicated forms of the 'metaphysical school'; it is significant that his theory distinguishes verse of this sort from imaginative poetry, and equally significant that it recognizes no place for the lyric which reflects the inner life through the imagination. Through the various forms of his thought he anticipates a number of the rival schools of the future: on the objective side of his critical thought he is related to Jonson;<sup>1</sup> on the side of allegory, to the school of mystical interpretation; on the side of experimental philosophy, to the new school of Science. Here his leadership, which found impassioned recognition in Cowley's *Address to the Royal Society*, produced fruitful results in criticism throughout the period of the Restoration.<sup>2</sup>

The determining factor in Jonson's early outlook on literature was Sidney's *Defence of Poesie*. This work, as is well known, circulated in manuscript for a dozen years within the courtly circle, and furnished material to Puttenham and Harington; but it was not widely known until it was published in 1595. For Jonson, then entering on his career, its influence was momentous; from it he derived his sense of the high dignity of poetry, his conception of the drama, and his classical point of view. Every critical utterance in *Every Man in his Humour*, acted in 1597 or 1598, exhibits strong marks of this influence. The prologue, not published until much later, though ascribed by Gifford to 1596, is a noble patchwork

<sup>1</sup> Cf. i. 26-27, 42-43.

<sup>2</sup> For a fuller discussion of Bacon's critical position, see K. Fischer, *Francis Bacon und seine Nachfolger*, 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1875, pp. 269-92, 311-14; Jacquinet, *Francisci Baconi de Re Litteraria Judicia*, Paris, 1863; and E. Flügel, 'Bacon's Historia Literaria,' in *Anglia*, 1899, vol. xxii.



of passages from Sidney;<sup>1</sup> the impassioned defence of

1

JONSON

(Gregory Smith, ii. 389)

‘ . . . .

To make a child, now swadled, to  
proceede

Man, and then shoote vp, in one  
beard and weede,

Past threescore yeeeres; or with  
three rustie swords,

And helpe of some few foot-and-  
halfe-foote words,

Fight ouer *Yorke* and *Lancasters*  
long iarres,

And in the tyring-house bring  
wounds to scarres.

He rather prayes you will be  
pleas’d to see

One such to day; as other playes  
should be;

Where neither *Chorus* wafts you  
ore the seas;

Nor creaking throne comes downe,  
the boyes to please;

Nor nimble squibbe is seene, to  
make afear’d

The gentlewomen; nor roul’d  
bullet heard,

To say it thunders; nor tempes-  
tuous drumme

Rumbles, to tell you when the  
storme doth come;

But deedes and language such as  
men doe vse,

And persons such as *Comædie*  
would chuse,

When she would shew an Image  
of the times,

And sport with humane follies, not  
with crimes,

SIDNEY

(Gregory Smith, i. 176 sq., 197 sq.)

‘ Now, of time they are much  
more liberall, for ordinary it is that  
two young Princes fall in loue.  
After many trauerces, she is got  
with childe, deliuered of a faire  
boy; he is lost, groweth a man,  
falls in loue, and is ready to get  
another child; and all this in two  
hours space . . . While in the  
meantime two Armies flye in,  
represented with foure swords and  
bucklers, and then what harde  
heart will not receiue it for a  
pitched field? . . . You shal haue  
*Asia* of the one side, and *Affrick*  
of the other, and so many other  
vnder-kingdoms that the Player,  
when he commeth in, must euer  
begin with telling where he is, or  
els the tale wil not be conceiued.  
Now ye shal haue three Ladies  
walke to gather flowers, and then  
we must beleue the stage to be  
a Garden. By and by, we heare  
newes of shipwracke in the same  
place, and then wee are to blame  
if we accept it not for a Rock.  
Vpon the backe of that comes out  
a hidious Monster, with fire and  
smoke, and then the miserable  
beholders are bounde to take it for  
a Caue . . . Comedy is an imitation  
of the common errors of our life,  
which he representeth in the most  
ridiculous and scornfull sort that  
may be, so as it is impossible that  
any beholder can be content to be  
such a one. . . This doth the  
Comedy handle so in our priuate

poetry and of its high and serious intent, in the fifth act,<sup>1</sup> repeats the main argument of Sidney's work; even the conception of 'humours' and of their function in comedy, in the induction to *Every Man out of his Humour*, is in a measure the adaptation of a fashionable phrase of the day to Sidney's theory of comedy,<sup>2</sup> though the genius of Jonson has intensified and individualized the portrayal of character beyond the limits of mere Horatian and Renaissance *decorum*. That the glamour of a noble life, and the literary fame which this very decade was adding to it, should fire the mind of Elizabethan youth is not strange. Sidney's culture set its seal on the young Jonson, and dedicated him to the classical ideal.

From the beginning Jonson's critical utterances were based on authority, the vehement and individual expressions of another's thought. He was not merely influenced by the books he happened to read; he consciously sought the ideas of others to widen his own outlook and to serve as the materials of his own criticism. The works of the Latin prosemen, Cicero, Quintilian, Seneca, Pliny, Petronius, were doubtless the earliest of his intellectual possessions, and he restated their thought with such

Except we make 'hem such, by  
louing still

Our popular errors, when we know  
th'are ill.

I meane such errors as you'll all  
confesse,

By laughing at them, they deserue  
no lesse;

Which when you heartily doe,  
there's hope left then,

You, that haue so grac'd monsters,  
may like men.'

and domestical matters, as with hearing it we get as it were an experience what is to be looked for of a niggardly *Demea*, of a crafty *Danius*, of a flattering *Gnato*, of a vaine glorious *Thraso*. . . The sack of his owne faults lye so behinde hys back that he seeth not himselfe daunce the same measure; whereto yet nothing can more open his eyes then to finde his own actions contemptibly set forth,' &c.

<sup>1</sup> Gregory Smith, ii. 388.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. ii. 390-2; cf. *ibid.* i. 200, ll. 19-34, and *supra*, p. xiv, note, *ad fin.*

clearness and power that it became the thought of seventeenth-century England no less than of insolent Greece and haughty Rome. His knowledge of critical developments on the continent was limited by his small French and less Italian;<sup>1</sup> but he became thoroughly acquainted with the work of the modern Latinists. Sidney might have introduced him to Scaliger and Erasmus; to know Terence was to know his fourth-century scholiast Donatus, whose little tract on tragedy and comedy was printed in nearly all the editions; how early he knew the German and Dutch critics, Pontanus and Buchler, Heinsius and Justus Lipsius, it is difficult to say.<sup>2</sup> The *Institutions* of Pontanus appeared in 1594; Heinsius's translation of Aristotle's *Poetics*, his treatise on the constitution of tragedy, and his edition of Horace, between 1610 and 1612.

In the interval Jonson had already planned his observations on the *Ars Poetica* of Horace, first alluded to in 1605; the dialogue which he projected somewhat later was not to be written until Dryden's day.<sup>3</sup> In the robust prose of the *Discoveries* he embedded the main arguments of these Dutch scholars, to an extent which has only been ascertained by the most recent research; the final pages on the theory of poetry, in which, as Dryden thought,<sup>4</sup> 'we have as many and profitable rules for perfecting the stage as any wherewith the French can furnish us,' are for the most part literally transferred from the works of Heinsius and others. This I chanced to discover some two or three years ago, and since then M. Maurice Castelain and Mr. Percy Simpson have been able to point to still further obligations to similar sources.<sup>5</sup>

Regardless of the bearing of this debt on Jonson's own claims as a critic, the fact itself indicates that the star of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. i. 211. 9-11, 212. 10-11, and notes.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. i. 226.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. i. 10, 16, and note.

<sup>4</sup> Ker, i. 83.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. i. 222.

scholarship in criticism was travelling northward. Italy was more and more ceasing to be the cynosure of scholars and poets; and Fuller, for example, advises the traveller to avoid it, and to seek Holland, which seemed to him a microcosm of all Europe, in learning no less than in traffic or war.<sup>1</sup> During this period the Dutch scholars were in fact the mainstays of the classical tradition, and their influence affected the growth of criticism throughout Europe. La Mesnardière apostrophizes them with what seems to us inexplicable fervour.<sup>2</sup> The fame of Daniel Heinsius, in whom classical authority and rational freedom seemed harmonized, is especially significant. Everywhere, from Italy to England and from Sweden to Spain, he influenced the prestige and interpretation of the Aristotelian canons; and later, Corneille, Racine, and Dryden deferred to his authority. But it was early in the generation of Balzac and Chapelain that he loomed largest. For them he was 'the legitimate successor of Scaliger'; 'sitting on Scaliger's throne he dispensed laws to all civilized Europe'; he was 'a prophet or sibyl in matters of criticism', and his treatise *De Tragoediae Constitutione* 'the quintessence of Aristotle's *Poetics*'.<sup>3</sup> While Italian critics were losing themselves in the quagmires of 'metaphysical' wit, the Dutch continued the earlier traditions of Italian classicism, inherited from the Aristotelian commentaries of Robortelli and Vettori and the systematic treatises of Scaliger and Minturno.

Jonson's study of Roman rhetoricians and Dutch Latinists explains, in some measure, his gradual transformation of Sidney's ideals. The changes of criticism from Fracastoro and Minturno to Heinsius and Vossius are

<sup>1</sup> *Holy State*, 1640, iii. 4. 5-7.

<sup>2</sup> *Poétique*, 1640, p. 215 sq.

<sup>3</sup> Balzac, *Œuvres complètes*, 1665, i. 173, 219, ii. 531; Chapelain, *Lettres*, ed. 1880-3, i. 269, 424. Professor Saintsbury admirably sums up the merits of Heinsius's chief contribution to criticism (*Hist. of Crit.*, ii. 336-7).

paralleled by the differences between the *Defence of Poesie* and the *Discoveries*. His earlier work contains passionate rhapsodies on the poet's consecrated office, but these gradually disappear or are uttered with less warmth; the splendid passage in the final act of *Every Man in his Humour*, to which I have already alluded, was dropped in the folio of 1616. The allegorical substratum of Sidney's theory was a mediaeval survival repugnant to the seventeenth century: for the allegorist the plot or fable was merely the veil of an inner truth, the coating of a bitter but wholesome pill; for the neo-classicist it was all in all. Aristotle was responsible for the idea that the plot is the 'soul' of dramatic poetry; and Jonson's critical interests were centred more and more on the technique of dramatic construction and the practical duty of critics, with a powerful but minor interest in the rhetoric of style. The results of his studies were grafted on English criticism, through his influence over his younger contemporaries and through the wide attention paid to his critical work after the Restoration. It was due to him that the pregnant utterances of the post-classic rhetoricians and the lucid and rational classicism of the Dutch scholars became part and parcel of English thought. It did not need the latter to increase his growing scorn for the multitude, but in the pages of Heinsius he found critical justification for it; and in Heinsius, too, he found the plea for the liberty of poets<sup>1</sup> with which he tempers his own classicism.

Sidney's *Defence*, and especially his critique of *Gorboduc*, may then be said to have given the critics of this generation their classical impetus. The details of Jonson's far greater service to the same cause need not detain us here; they have been studied by numerous scholars, and admirably summed up by Dr. Hamelius.<sup>2</sup> Jonson was perhaps the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. i. 56. 16 sq., and note.

<sup>2</sup> *Die Kritik in der englischen Literatur des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts*,



first Englishman with the critical temper, and the ultimate results of his power were great. But he contributed no single original idea to criticism, and Dryden's statement, that 'there are few serious thoughts which are new in him,'<sup>1</sup> has proved truer with time. His attempts at concrete criticism are all significant, but the method in most cases is not his own, and in others the very language is literally borrowed.<sup>2</sup> The famous lines to Shakespeare, in which alien thought and phrase are fused in the glow of the imaginative reason, and envy closes her eyes, represent Jonson at his best.

Jonson's literary judgements, before he dressed them in this alien garb, are accessible to us only in his conversations with Drummond; and even here we are dependent on the good faith and memory of another. Here we see that he had definite opinions and prejudices concerning his contemporaries, which do not find specific expression elsewhere; but the method (so far as can be judged from Drummond's curt notes) does not advance much beyond the intermittent impressionism of Sidney and Puttenham. But if (as a friend's fancy suggests) Jonson's talks with Drummond represent the general tone of literary conversation in his time, say at the Mermaid, they acquire an added significance. That there was much talk of this sort cannot be doubted; there was already thought of the Italianate or *Précieuse* academy or salon, where 'critics, essayists, linguists, poets, and other professors of that faculty of wit shall at certain hours i' th' day resort, . . . a second Sorbonne where all doubts or differences of

Leipzig, 1897, pp. 22-30. The various German and other monographs on Jonson as a critic or literary theorist add little to our knowledge, but few are as grossly inadequate as Grossmann's *Ben Jonson als Kritiker*, Berlin, 1898. It is unnecessary to repeat what I have already said in my *Lit. Crit. in the Ren.*, pp. 288-90, 306-9, much of which needs revision in the light of my own later researches.

<sup>1</sup> Ker, i. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the characterization of Bacon as an orator, *infra*, p. 26. and note.

learning, honour, duellism, criticism, and poetry shall be disputed.'<sup>1</sup> Interests of this sort prepare us for Caroline taste.

What passed between Drayton and Reynolds, in their long winter discussions over 'moderate meate and wine and fire',<sup>2</sup> it would be interesting to know. Each has given us a taste of his critical power. Reynolds's knowledge of continental literatures was, if anything, more extensive than even Drummond's;<sup>3</sup> Drayton's sympathies were more insular and (what does not of necessity follow) more wholesome. His well-known lines to Reynolds, *Of Poets and Poesie*, are an example of the informal and intimate literary epistle in verse, of which the ultimate source was Horace, and of which there were so many illustrations in Italy and France. Even in this form the individual utterances are universalized by the uplift of verse (the Muse was a sure friend of the Jacobean critic); and time has confirmed, and remembered, what Drayton says of Chaucer and Sidney, Marlowe and Chapman. In the case of his contemporaries, except Daniel and Sylvester, a friendly bias provokes the spirit of eulogy, and narrows but does not destroy critical insight. A similar roll-call of the poets may be found in Bolton's *Hypercritica* and in the chapter on poetry in Peacham's *Compleat Gentleman*. The latter is hardly more than a compilation of passages from Scaliger on the Latin poets, and from Puttenham on the English, with an occasional detail or anecdote from other sources;<sup>4</sup> but it did no mean service in incorporating Scaliger's study of Virgil in respect to the cardinal virtues of prudence, energy, variety, and sweetness, and in general the piecemeal borrowings and the exaggerated deference to Scaliger may be regarded as indices of Jacobean ideals of scholarship. The long list of poets, each with his tag of

<sup>1</sup> Chapman, *Monsieur d'Olive*, 1606, act i, sc. 1.

<sup>2</sup> i. 134.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. i. 146-7.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. i. 241 sq.

critical comment, is preceded by a brief but ardent defence of poetry; both list and apology are merely interesting as Elizabethan survivals.

Jacobean criticism does not deal adequately with the fundamental problems of its own age or of the literary period which it succeeded. The crux of romantic and classical dramas it does not touch. The half-hearted solution of Webster, that the classical rules are right but romantic freedom profitable, is an echo of many a despairing cry in Spain and France;<sup>1</sup> but the knot was left for the age of Dryden to disentangle if it could.

## II. EARLY CAROLINE TENTATIVES

Though the star of Italy was no longer in the ascendant, and the formal treatises of the Renaissance had lost their hold on English criticism, obscurer and more fanciful Italian influences made themselves felt at about this time. One of these is exemplified in the *Mythomystes*. In this perverse work, Henry Reynolds, the friend of Drayton and the translator of the *Aminta*, has given us the chief example in English of the systematic application of Neoplatonism to the interpretation of poetry. Bacon had already indicated the road, but Reynolds follows it into a tropical forest of strange fancies: the Cabalists and Neoplatonists, Philo and Reuchlin, but especially Pico della Mirandola and Alessandro Farra, here find an English voice.

Drayton's praise of his friend<sup>2</sup> is justified by the wide culture which this book indicates, and the opening pages make one regret that its author has gone off at a tangent. He belongs to the 'metaphysical school' of literary criticism; in this field the *Mythomystes* furnishes perhaps the only analogue of a method and state of mind illustrated in poetry by Donne and his epigones, in philosophy by the Cambridge

<sup>1</sup> Cf. i. 235-6.

<sup>2</sup> i. 134.

Platonists, and in pulpit oratory by such men as Corbet and King. But for the central principle of 'metaphysical' poetry he offers no explanation; not until the days of Addison and Johnson did the nature of the 'conceit' receive formal analysis in England; the casual utterances of poets, even the more definite expressions of Cowley's *Odes*, scarcely proceed beyond *obiter dicta* of taste. The Italians and Spaniards attempted to formulate the poetic principles of the reigning school of poetry; and in the treatises of Tesauro, Gracián, Sforza Pallavicino, Pellegrini, Minozzi, Dell' Epifania, Aromatari, and many others, now covered with the dust of time, these principles were studied and debated with remarkable subtlety.<sup>1</sup> The *Mythomystes* has another historic interest in its relation to the controversy of 'ancients and moderns': it professes to contain a brief for the 'ancients', but it argues their claims on grounds utterly repugnant to neoclassicism,—not their superior portrayal of the fundamentals of human nature, but their defter manipulation of the cabalistic mysteries. For Bacon allegorical interpretation seemed to furnish an opportunity for the scientific explanation of poetry; Reynolds's method implies the negation of science.

Besides the genial enthusiasms of Pico and the involved mysticism of Farra, which suffered a sea-change in the work of More and Reynolds, Strada's studies in style attracted many men of letters from Crashaw and Hakewill to Dryden. What remained of the earlier Italian influence appears in the critical work of Milton. He remained loyal to the 'sublime art' taught in 'the Italian commentaries of

<sup>1</sup> On this obscure phase of critical history, cf. Croce, *I Trattatisti italiani del Concettismo e B. Gracian*, Naples, 1899; Belloni, *Il Seicento*, Milan, 1899, ch. xi; Foffano, 'La Critica letteraria nel secolo XVII,' in *Ricerche letterarie*, Leghorn, 1897; Borinski, *B. Gracian und die Hofliteratur in Deutschland*, Halle, 1894; and Menéndez y Pelayo, *Historia de las Ideas estéticas en España*, Madrid, 1896, iii. 477-528.

Castelvetro, Tasso, Mazzoni, and others';<sup>1</sup> and his conception of the poet's consecrated office and the creative function of the imagination was passed on to his nephew, Edward Phillips, and thence through many stages into modern criticism. In the excerpts at the end of this volume, in the *Areopagitica*, in the anonymous *Nova Solyma*, the aesthetic ideals of the Commonwealth are expressed; but on the whole the Puritan contribution to criticism is to be traced by indirection in a general influence on English life and taste. Milton handed on to Dennis a deep conviction of the fundamental relations of poetry and religion, and to Warton a vital conception of the imagination; his standards thus helped in the transformation of eighteenth-century taste. But he himself indicates the limitations of his critical or rather controversial method when he applies his own theory to modern practice; his venomous onslaught on Hall's satires, his contempt of Sidney's *Arcadia*, his caustic allusion to Shakespeare are examples of his attitude.

The fanciful humour of Boccacini gained for him a far wider audience than Castelvetro or Strada, Pico or Farra. The first 'century' of the *Ragguagli di Parnaso* appeared in 1612; a half-dozen years later the book is alluded to by Bolton.<sup>2</sup> From this time it did not cease to exercise a potent influence on European letters. In France Sorel and Furetière, Guéret and Boileau, in England Suckling and Sheppard, Buckingham and Rochester, Swift and Addison, were among its many imitators;<sup>3</sup> the last of several translations was virtually contemporary with the *Spectator*.

Boccacini owed something to Lucian, as Bolton noted, perhaps still more to his immediate predecessors (one of

<sup>1</sup> i. 206.

<sup>2</sup> i. 84.

<sup>3</sup> A brief and incomplete list of English imitations was published by R. Brotanek in the *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen*, 1903, cxi. 409-14.



them, Caporali,<sup>1</sup> was not unknown in England, and may have directly influenced Suckling and others); but for the seventeenth century the *Ragguagli* seemed to create a new and fantastic world, which poets and princes, scholars and critics shared with Apollo and the Muses. The completeness in itself of each incident or section of the book gave something of the effect of a series of fanciful essays. The fiction, even more than the bold and often striking ideas for which it was merely the occasion, impressed the imagination of Europe; the irresponsible method of appealing all disputes to the court of Apollo fascinated an age saturated with 'metaphysical' fancies and tired of the formal argument of scholars. So Wither (if it be he who wrote the *Great Assises holden in Parnassus*) indicted the malicious gazettes of the day, and arraigned them before Apollo's throne; so Sheppard, wearied by Scaliger's noisy onslaught on Homer, haled him for this offence before that sovereign court.<sup>2</sup>

But the form which became most popular in England was that of the *Sessions of the Poets*, in which a foreign mould was shaped to suit a truly English theme. The hunt for the Laureateship gave Suckling an opportunity to hit off the characteristics, rather personal than literary, of all the possible candidates in his own coterie; it is the old Elizabethan 'roll-call' with its spirit changed, and a zest added by the conception of a contest in the imaginary world which Boccalini had made real. The opportunity for personal satire was what attracted Suckling and Rochester. It is significant that the French imitations of the *Ragguagli*, like their original, were chiefly in prose: in England, for a long time, the followers of Boccalini expressed themselves

<sup>1</sup> Caporali is included by Reynolds among the chief Italian poets; see *infra*, p. 146, and note.

<sup>2</sup> *The Socratick Session, or the Arraignment and Conviction of Julius Scaliger*, in *Epigrams*, 1651, pp. 177-99.

in verse ; this was the instrument of Caporali and of his Spanish imitators, Cervantes and Lope de Vega. Criticism was still seeking an adequate vehicle ; Boccalini's was one of the forms which it tried and wearied of ; but the form continued to find a place even in the age of Addison and Swift.

In the development of the essay, the *Ragguagli di Parnaso* cannot be ignored. While there was no immediate transformation in the Essay itself, which had been undergoing dilution in the hands of such men as Cornwallis, John Stephens, and Robert Johnson, Boccalini contributed a fanciful element to criticism, and a lighter and sprightlier touch to prose and verse. In France, Balzac complained that the grave philosophic discourses of the previous generation had been superseded by lighter and more trifling forms: 'Art, Science, Prose & vers sont diferentes especes d'un mesme genre, & ce Genre se nomme *Bagatelles* en la Langue de la Cour.'<sup>1</sup> The outlook and the method of criticism were changing, and the change is indicative of new influences, proceeding from France, which penetrated English criticism in the third and fourth decades of the century, and saturated it in the sixth and seventh.

The current of events, in literature no less than in politics, had centred European attention on the French monarchy. Out of the chaos of intestine turmoil, and the conflicting ideals of Malherbe and Régnier, Ogier and Garasse, Hardy and Mairet, the unity of the national genius was beginning to be evolved. The French Academy, the Hôtel de Rambouillet, the *Cid* controversy were matters of international concern. Balzac furnished a signal illustration of French self-confidence by engaging in a critical dispute with the great Heinsius himself concerning one of the latter's Latin tragedies.<sup>2</sup> The classical canons

<sup>1</sup> *Socrate Chrestien & autres œuvres*, 1652, pref. sig. i.

<sup>2</sup> For the details of this controversy, in which Salmasius and others

of the Italians were acquiring a new vogue under the leadership of Chapelain, but the grave and academic style of their treatises was being superseded by the cultivated and well-bred manner of gentlemen ; the control of criticism was passing from *savants* to *beaux-esprits*.

All this was not without effect in England. The court of Henrietta Maria was soon infected with the *Précieuse* spirit.<sup>1</sup> Balzac's letters, Charron on Wisdom, and many kindred works, as well as poems and romances, were translated into English ; and innumerable other indications of the effect of the new French outlook may be observed. It is not necessary to give an exaggerated importance to this foreign influence, which could never have found a foothold unless prepared for by the developments of the national genius itself ; to point to a foreign source may be merely to beg the question, to evade the fundamental problem of a nation's intellectual growth. But it is at least significant of the disintegration of what was once a unified national taste (as described in Mr. Courthope's philosophic pages) that criticism had recourse to new and diverse continental fashions, which it was unable wholly to assimilate ; in France alone it was to find that new unity foreshadowed which all Europe was to share at the high tide of classicism. At this time, as contemporaries rightly saw, Englishmen were willing to assume every foreign garb of thought, French, Spanish, Italian, 'not any one, but jointly all,' and this was truly the spirit of the age.<sup>2</sup>

This intellectual ferment can hardly be said to have received reasoned expression in criticism ; and so slight a thing as Sir William Alexander's *Anacrisis* therefore

also took part, see Jonckbloet, *Geschiedenis der Nederlandsche Letterkunde*, ed. 1889, iii. 60-5.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. J. B. Fletcher, 'Précieuses at the Court of Charles I,' in the *Journal of Comparative Literature*, New York, 1903, vol. i, no. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Cf., e. g., Shackerley Marmion, *Holland's Leaguer*, 1632, ii. 5, iii. 2.

acquires a typical significance which it scarcely deserves. The tastes it illustrates, however, are more or less characteristic of the age. The comparison of poetry to a formal garden stands side by side with an attack on Scaliger and a defence of poetic freedom ; Virgil and Lucan, Tasso and Sidney are its idols ; and modern poetry is summed up in the prose romances. The style of the *Anacrisis* approximates to that of the preface to *Gondibert*, and both to Balzac's. A new and tentative classicism was struggling through the ordeal of *Préciosité*.

In the next decade or two the results of contact with France appear also in the new theory and practice of translation, and in the critical trend toward simplicity of style. To each of these problems I shall return later.

### III. THE NEW AESTHETICS : HOBBS AND DAVENANT

Bacon, as we have seen, gave poetry a definite place in a scheme of the arts and sciences : he referred it to the imagination, and used this term to explain the idealizing process by which poetry transforms the materials of life into forms of art. But he did not attempt to analyse this process, or to explain the sources and mutual relations of the various functions of the mind. This is the peculiar work of Hobbes. The critics of the sixteenth century had dealt with literature as an external phenomenon ; they isolated the work of art from its position in space and time, and from its relation to the mind which created it. This generalization does not imply that the historical sense did not make itself felt in some of the literary controversies, or that such words as wit, fancy, imagination, and the like do not occasionally and casually occur in criticism ; the Spanish critic Rengifo, for example, asserts a vehement imagination, *furor poeticus*, and 'agudeza de ingenio' to be

essentials of the poet.<sup>1</sup> But such words as these are casual and unreasoned; they are not analysed; they remain, one might say, abstract virtues of the poet, and are not brought into fundamental relation with the work of art itself. The concrete work is tested *in vacuo*, and the critic is concerned with its unity, probability, regularity, harmony, and the like. The seventeenth century first attempted to deal accurately with the relation between the creative mind and the work of art; it began to analyse the content of such terms as wit, fancy, and taste. This interest is one of critical terminology quite as much as of psychology. Locke sums up this movement in the domain of philosophy: assuming that all words are merely the symbols of ideas, he attempted to ascertain precisely the content of philosophic terms. But the movement had been going on throughout the century in every field. Hobbes is here a pioneer; he left an impress on critical terminology, and his psychology became the groundwork of Restoration criticism. The relation of Descartes to French classicism suggests the position of Hobbes in England.

Hobbes's theory of poetry is a logical result of his philosophy of mind. For him, a mechanical universe continues to make itself felt on the *tabula rasa* of the human mind; these impressions the mind retains, arranges, and combines. 'Time and Education' (as he puts it briefly, in popular fashion, in the answer to Davenant) 'begets experience; Experience begets memory; Memory begets Judgement and Fancy; Judgement begets the strength and structure, and Fancy begets the ornaments of a Poem.'<sup>2</sup> Here fancy and judgement, like Bacon's 'imagination', are mental processes which re-arrange the materials of experience into forms of art; but for Hobbes the imaginative process is no longer sufficient or even vital: fancy furnishes the 'ornaments', and judgement the 'strength

<sup>1</sup> *Arte Poética Española*, 1592, ch. xix.

<sup>2</sup> ii. 59.



and structure', of poetry. His distinction between the two became a commonplace of criticism in the period of classicism: 'wit,' the current term for fancy, denotes quickness of mind in seeing the resemblances between disparate objects; judgement, or reason, finds differences in objects apparently similar. This distinction had been suggested by the Italians of the Cinquecento,<sup>1</sup> and had been more clearly indicated, as a difference in human temperament, by Bacon;<sup>2</sup> but with Hobbes,<sup>3</sup> who first gave it precision, it became part and parcel of English thought, and was adopted by Robert Boyle,<sup>4</sup> Locke,<sup>5</sup> Temple,<sup>6</sup> and Addison.<sup>7</sup> The French had for some time realized the critical significance of the antithesis, but they never formulated it so clearly as this.<sup>8</sup> Throughout the second half of the century, in both countries, the two terms were placed in a sort of conventional opposition, like the *doctrina* and *eloquentia* of the humanists, and the clash resounds through neoclassical criticism.<sup>9</sup>

The word 'wit', which in Hobbes's day had become, as he tells us, a synonym for 'fancy',<sup>10</sup> is the English equivalent for the French *esprit*, which in its turn owed its connotation to the Italian *ingegno* and the Spanish *ingenio*.<sup>11</sup> In the Elizabethan age 'wit' denoted the intellect in general, in opposition to 'will', the faculty of volition.

<sup>1</sup> Cf., e. g., Antonio Persio, *Trattato dell' Ingegno dell' Huomo*, Venice, 1576, p. 77 sq. Cf. Sir John Davies, *Poet. Works*, ed. Grosart, i. 71-7.

<sup>2</sup> *Nov. Org.* § lv.

<sup>3</sup> *Humane Nature*, 1650, x. 4; *Leviathan*, 1651, i. 8.

<sup>4</sup> *Occasional Reflections*, 1665, p. 46.

<sup>5</sup> *Human Understanding*, 1690, ii. 11. 2.

<sup>6</sup> *Miscellanea*, 2nd pt., p. 318.

<sup>7</sup> *Spectator*, no. 62. Cf. Hazlitt, *Works*, ed. Waller and Glover, 1902-4, viii. 19 sq.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. La Mesnardière, *Poétique*, 1640, p. 3, &c.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. ii. 94, 159, 185, &c. <sup>10</sup> *Leviathan*, i. 8.

<sup>11</sup> This was pointed out by Temple, in his essay *Of Poetry* (*Miscellanea*, 2nd pt., p. 305).



Before the French, the Italians had given their term *ingegno*, or *bell' ingegno*, the significance of quickness and keenness of fancy, and had designated those who possessed it *belli ingegni*; in imitation of them the French employed *bel esprit* both for the mental process and for the man who possessed it. Such phrases as 'ingenious and conceited', 'sharpness of ingenuity',<sup>1</sup> which occur incessantly in the literature of the day, are the Elizabethan equivalents of the Italian *bell' ingegno*. Gradually, however, even before the waning of Italian influence, the native word 'wit' had been acquiring the signification of 'ingenuity'. Chapman, in 1613, seems to think 'man of wit' a strange phrase;<sup>2</sup> and one of the characters in *Every Man out of his Humour* calls attention to the fact that another 'said wit for ingenuity'.<sup>3</sup> Jonson uses the two words constantly as synonymous, however: 'How like you her wit?—Her ingenuity is excellent.'<sup>4</sup> From this time 'wit' became identical with the imaginative or rather fanciful element in poetry, and more or less important as this element was more or less valued by succeeding schools.

Hobbes, as we have seen, clearly distinguished wit from judgement, and, what is more, insisted on the necessity of both in poetry. Davenant's preface and Hobbes's answer were written in Paris, and both learnt in France that *jugement* is as essential to poetry as *esprit*. As early as 1650 there are signs that wit is under suspicion. So strong became the feeling that by itself it was insufficient for poetic creation, that gradually its original imaginative signification became subordinate, and Dennis employs it to denote 'a just mixture of Reason and Extravagance, that is such a mixture as reason may always be sure to predominate'.<sup>5</sup> Wit, which had originally signified the

<sup>1</sup> Jonson, *Works*, ed. Cunningham, i. 181, 109.

<sup>2</sup> *Plays*, ed. Shepherd, p. 345 sq.

<sup>3</sup> Jonson, ed. cit., i. 109.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Misc. in Verse and Prose*, 1693, pref.

faculty opposed to judgement, has thus, under the pressure of rationalism, come to include it. In Dryden's definition of wit as 'a propriety of thoughts and words',<sup>1</sup> which was accepted by Mulgrave,<sup>2</sup> Wolseley,<sup>3</sup> and others, until controverted by Addison,<sup>4</sup> the element of fancy is eradicated entirely. These variations in the meaning of a single term parallel the general changes of literary taste in the nation. Each succeeding school of poetry gives its own content to the critical terms which it inherits no less than to those it invents.

Hobbes's distinction of the poetic *genres* is the logical outcome of his philosophy. He conceives of them as conditioned by the divisions of the external world,—heroic, comic, and pastoral, corresponding to court, city, and country,—and man simply arranges what Nature gives in forms of his own speech, narrative or dramatic. The poetry of the court thus assumes the form of epic or tragedy; the poetry of the city, satire or comedy; the poetry of the country, bucolics or pastoral comedy.<sup>5</sup> Here there is no place for lyrical forms; they are 'but essayes and parts of an entire poem.' Bacon had set the example for this indifference, and Temple<sup>6</sup> follows in the path of Hobbes. Nor is there any place for didactic verse, for the subject of poetry is not natural causes or moral theory, but 'the manners of men', presented in the guise of life-like fiction. The exclusion of didactic verse is Aristotelian,<sup>7</sup> and had furnished the subject for infinite controversy in the Renaissance;<sup>8</sup> but the seventeenth century tended more and more to follow Roman practice rather than Aristotelian precept in this respect. Yet Hobbes's 'manners of men' fails to suggest that the whole content of human life

<sup>1</sup> Ker, i. 190.    <sup>2</sup> ii. 288.    <sup>3</sup> Preface to Rochester's *Valentinian*, 1683.

<sup>4</sup> *Spectator*, no. 62.

<sup>5</sup> ii. 55.

<sup>6</sup> *Miscellanea*, 2nd pt., p. 349.

<sup>7</sup> *Poet.* i. 8.

<sup>8</sup> See my *Lit. Crit. in the Ren.*, p. 39 sq.

(ἡθῆ, πάθη, πράξεις<sup>1</sup>) is the subject-matter of poetry, and is Horatian rather than Aristotelian.

The subject-matter of poetry is, then, the manners of men; its method is that of verisimilitude, or resemblance to the actual conditions of life; and Hobbes's scorn for ghosts and magic is the natural outcome of this insistence on *vraisemblance*. From acquaintance with the manners of men, rather than from books, the poet is to obtain the elements of style, or 'expression'. To know human nature well, to retain images of it in the memory that are distinct and clear, is the source of perspicuity and propriety of style, and of *decorum*<sup>2</sup> in character-drawing; to know much of it is the source of variety and novelty of expression. Hobbes's aesthetic is consistent and logical throughout, the first of its kind in English literature.

When he wields this body of theory in the concrete field of criticism his discretion fails. A quarter of a century intervened between the publication of the answer to Davenant and the preface to Homer, and the theory has not fundamentally changed. Phillips<sup>3</sup> preferred the latter because of the bias and friendly compliment of the former, and certainly Hobbes's judgement of *Gondibert* and of the *British Princes* must be approached with at least as much caution as the flattering dedications of the period. In the later preface he justifies his taste by the preference of Homer to both Virgil and Lucan. He formulates seven 'virtues' of the epic,—in diction, style, imagery, plot, elevation of fancy (which he says is usually overestimated as a virtue of poetry), the amplitude of the subject, and the justice and impartiality of the poet,—and he then compares Homer with Virgil and Lucan in respect to these essential qualities. Dryden complains that Hobbes 'begins the praise of Homer where he should have ended it',<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* i. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Lit. Crit. in the Ren.*, p. 85 sq.

<sup>3</sup> *Theatrum Poetarum*, 1675, ii. 177.

<sup>4</sup> *Ker*, i. 252.

meaning that Hobbes first considers the choice of words and the harmony of numbers instead of the design, the manners, and the thoughts ; and it is true that he also fails to express several other of the main tendencies of neo-classicism. Unlike his more orthodox contemporaries, he does not give to the logical structure of a poem the same sort of exaggerated importance that the theorists of art for art's sake have given to the externals of style ; he cares nothing for the rules which the French had inherited from the Italians ; he has serious doubts about a fixed standard of taste. The method of comparison which he urges was to have an important bearing on the progress of criticism. This was a conventional exercise from the time of Scaliger to that of Rapin, but Hobbes's way of basing his judgements on general qualities of style and content is an advance on theirs. The method had already been adopted, in the previous year, in Rymer's preface to Rapin ; but it is inherent in Hobbes's system ; and from Hobbes Rymer acquired, especially later, something of the same external and mechanical outlook on life, the same political philosophy and spirit of conformity, the same clangor of style, the same magisterial attitude, and that intellectual arrogance which made Dryden compare the sage of Malmesbury with Lucretius.<sup>1</sup>

Davenant's long preface to *Gondibert* is a dilution of the aesthetic theory of Hobbes, but Tasso's discourses on the epic and Chapelain's preface to Marino's *Adone* doubtless served as his models. Nothing could differ more widely than the prose styles of the two men ; the style of Hobbes foreshadows Rymer, while Cowley and Davenant prepare the way for Dryden and Temple. Of the four men who associated themselves with the composition of *Gondibert* in Paris, Hobbes was sixty-two years of age, Davenant and Waller forty-four, and Cowley thirty-two ; obviously,

<sup>1</sup> Ker, ii. 259.

the eldest of these was less likely than the others to succumb to the influences of French taste. The 'heroic poem', like the pastoral an artificial product of the later Renaissance, was in the air in Paris at that time. Chapelain had been at work on the *Pucelle* for nearly fifteen years, Lemoyne on his *Saint Louis* somewhat less; and Davenant's preface bears a remarkable resemblance to those which were soon to precede these and many other French epics in the dozen years that followed.<sup>1</sup> The spirit with which they worked explains that of Davenant. It explains his conception of epic practice as a merely mechanical consequence of epic theory; it explains how experience of human nature, which Hobbes considered essential to the writing of great poetry, tends to limit itself to 'conversation'; it explains the talk about 'nature', which was to be more and more fundamental for English criticism, and the attack on 'conceits', one of the first of its kind in our language.<sup>2</sup> The *concetti* of the Italians had lost ground in France for some time; Davenant started a campaign which was sustained without a break in England. In both countries there had been a 'metaphysical' school of poetry, but in neither had the principles of the school received a critical formulation; in Italy alone, as we have seen, were both sides of the argument adequately stated. Davenant himself shows his natural leanings toward the older school in his conception of poetry as a presentation of truth 'through unfrequented and new ways, and from the most remote Shades, by representing Nature, though not in an affected, yet in an unusual dress'.<sup>3</sup> This is far from the principle of Pope's 'what oft was thought but ne'er so well expressed',<sup>4</sup> in that famous couplet which unpleasantly suggested to

<sup>1</sup> Cf. ii. 331, 334.

<sup>2</sup> ii. 22.

<sup>3</sup> ii. 23.

<sup>4</sup> Pope borrowed the idea from the preface to the 1701 edition of Boileau's poems; but the principle was an old one, and Dr. Hamelius has found an expression of it in Cartwright's verses in *Jonsonus Virbius*,



Lowell the idea of Nature under the hands of a lady's maid. The defence of the stanza form, the confused conception of 'wit', the insistence on religion as well as nature and reason as the basis of poetry, all suggest Davenant's place in a transitional period of English criticism.

Cowley, the junior of Davenant by a dozen years, occupies a similar position. The influence of his poetry on contemporary taste was powerful; but taste does not become criticism until it has received reasoned expression. His keenest intellectual powers expressed themselves, however, in his verse; in his prose he aimed rather at charm and clarity, after the fashion of the new standards of France: here his critical opinions are casual and fragmentary, and unlike Milton's, they explain the externals rather than the essence of his own poetic practice. His chief critical utterances are contained in the 1656 edition of his poems, both in the general preface and in the notes to the *Davideis*. This preface contains a passage acknowledging the triumph of the Commonwealth which he omitted from later editions, and for which his first biographer apologizes at some length.<sup>1</sup> The spirit of the Commonwealth exhibits itself in the insistence that poets should avoid obscenity and profaneness,<sup>2</sup> and in the impassioned defence of biblical material for modern poetry.<sup>3</sup> In the half-dozen years between Davenant's preface to *Gondibert* (in which the Christian epic had been defended) and this preface of Cowley, the heroic poem, sacred and profane, had received considerable illustration in France, both in theory and in practice; and Desmarets's long campaign in favour of the *merveilleux chrétien* was inaugurated in the following year.<sup>4</sup> Cowley does not accept their moralistic theory; for him, as for Waller, 'to communicate delight to others . . . is the main end of Poesie,' and a soul

<sup>1</sup> See ii. 83. 30 sq., and note; ii. 124. 29 sq., and note.

<sup>2</sup> ii. 85.

<sup>3</sup> ii. 87 sq.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. note to ii. 88. 2 sq.

'filled with bright and delightful Idæas' the fountain of poetic creation.<sup>1</sup> He has paraphrased in charming prose Ovid's complaint that poetry will not bear fruit in a troubled mind or body, and he has extended the principle to the influence of climate and of a 'warlike, various, and a tragical age', which is 'best to write of, but worst to write in':<sup>2</sup> this is the logical outcome of Hobbes's psychology. His later work connects itself largely with the foundation and progress of the Royal Society, and through it with the Baconian tradition; and he played so important a part in the attempt of the Society to organize a literary Academy for the refinement of English, that at his death the whole scheme was dropped.<sup>3</sup>

The influence of Hobbes's political philosophy on Restoration thought and conduct is well known; his outlook on life, and more especially the psychology by which it is explained, were scarcely less influential in the domain of letters. Tempered and refined by the social and literary influences proceeding from France, they became in the hands of younger men (not least of all in Cowley's *Odes*) instruments of power. No member of this group accepts an absolute standard of taste; they do not yield a complete subservience to classical authority or to the pseudo-classical Rules; the rationalistic temper has not as yet flooded criticism to the exclusion of all imaginative elements. They logically connect the critical activity of the first and the second Caroline periods; and Dryden begins his work at the point where Davenant and Cowley leave off.

#### IV. THE TREND TOWARD SIMPLICITY

In one of the many allegorical sketches of the seventeenth century which look back to Lucian and Boccacini and forward to the *Battle of the Books*, Rhetoric, queen

<sup>1</sup> ii. 81.

<sup>2</sup> ii. 80 sq.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. ii. 329, 337.

of the realm of Eloquence, and her prime minister Good Sense, are represented as threatened by innumerable foes. The troops of the queen, marshalled in defence of the Academy, her citadel, are the accepted literary forms, Histories, Epics, Lyrics, Dramas, Romances, Letters, Sermons, Philosophical Treatises, Translations, Orations, and the like; her enemies are the rhetorical figures and the perversions of style, Metaphors, Hyperboles, Similes, Descriptions, Comparisons, Allegories, Pedantries, Antitheses, Puns, Exaggerations, and a host of others. Ultimately the latter are defeated, and are in some cases banished, or else agree to serve as dependants in the realm of Eloquence.<sup>1</sup>

Under the form of stilted allegory this describes a real condition of literary history. The ideals of style underwent a radical change during the century, impelled not merely by unconscious growth, but by reasoned and aggressive effort. This long campaign of good sense against the figures of rhetoric is an important episode in the history of criticism. It may therefore be worth while to illustrate the general development in the case of a single literary form. I have selected the sermon as exhibiting in a marked degree all the conditions of the struggle for reform; and since the facts are not generally accessible, I shall state them briefly but in some detail.

The extent of the corruption of clerical taste, its influence on prose style in general, and the mass of critical literature devoted to its reform have alike been passed over in silence by English scholars. At a time when the classical influence

<sup>1</sup> Furetière, *Nouvelle Allegorique ou Histoire des derniers troubles arrivés au Royaume d'Eloquence*, Paris, 1658. The book contains a map of the field of battle (after the fashion of the famous *Carte du Tendre*) which charts with great clarity the puristic movement of seventeenth-century classicism; this is reproduced here on a reduced scale (see frontispiece). Cf. Pepys, *Diary*, 17 Nov. 1665.

was approaching its zenith, Dryden said that a kind of fanciful wit, which in Jonson's age seemed to have first ascended into the pulpit, 'yet finds the benefit of the clergy, for they are commonly the first corrupters of eloquence and the last reformed from vicious oratory.'<sup>1</sup> For an extended period this distorted fashion swept over Europe, and retained its influence in Italy, in Germany, and especially in Spain, long after it had lost its sway in France and England, though even in the last it was maintained by the spoken word for a considerable time after it had ceased to find currency on the printed page. There was a 'metaphysical school' of preachers no less than a 'metaphysical school' of poetry.<sup>2</sup> The theory of prose style in the seventeenth century cannot be understood without some account of the campaign waged against 'metaphysical' preaching, as the theory of poetic style has already been studied in connexion with the critical reaction against 'metaphysical' verse.

During the early stages of its popularity the 'conceit' was in general regarded as of Spanish origin, and Montaigne warns his readers against 'fantastical new-fangled Spagniolized and Petrarchistical inventions'.<sup>3</sup> When the conceit was adapted to the needs of the pulpit this too was regarded as the work of Spain,<sup>4</sup> though the practice became

<sup>1</sup> Ker, i. 173 sq.

<sup>2</sup> For this phase of pulpit oratory in Italy see the admirable sketch of B. Croce, *I Predicatori italiani del Seicento e il Gusto spagnuolo*, Naples, 1899, and Belloni's *Il Seicento*, pp. 409-17, 456-66; for France, Sainte-Beuve's *Port-Royal* and Jacquinet's *Les Prédicateurs du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle avant Bossuet*, 2nd ed., Paris, 1885; for Spain, besides the inevitable Ticknor, Gaudeau's *Les Prêcheurs burlesques en Espagne au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris, 1891. There is no adequate treatment of the subject in English, so far as I know.

<sup>3</sup> Florio's *Montaigne*, ii. 10.

<sup>4</sup> Tesauro, *Cannocchiale Aristotelico*, 7th ed., Bologna, 1675, p. 333. Somewhat later, in France and England, the Italians were held responsible for the new style.

current elsewhere before its first great Spanish exponent, the court preacher Paravicino, had printed a single sermon. It is not unlikely, however, that Spanish taste, with the growth of Spain's political power, exerted an influence on European culture that cannot fully be appraised from the mere records of its own literature. Literary and other fashions were continually credited to its people for which there is no Spanish evidence that is not later ; but habits of mind of every nation have often been seized upon by foreigners long before these habits have found adequate expression in the national literature. The consensus of recent scholarship, as is well known, has been more favourable to the theory of a general 'meta-physical' movement, exerting itself independently in the various countries of Europe ; but whether or not this new fashion first entered the pulpit in Spain, it found exponents everywhere, and soon destroyed the tradition of humanistic eloquence and gravity.

'L'avocat au Palais en hérissa son style,  
Et le docteur en chaire en sema l'Évangile.'<sup>1</sup>

The far-fetched simile, the conceit, the pun, the absurd antithesis formed the basis of the new preaching. A new manner, peculiarly adapted to the pulpit, was also evolved, as marked and definite as that of Euphuism itself. This was the *concetto predicabile*, or *conception théologique*, to which the Italian critic Tesauro devoted an excursus in his remarkable book on conceits.<sup>2</sup> Its function was to inculcate a moral truth by means of a scriptural or physical symbol ; the symbol selected seemed so far from the purpose that the mind received a shock of surprise when the preacher appeared to justify its selection by argument and by sacred authority. Ingenuity overleapt itself in seeking strange symbols and similes, and strange titles for the

<sup>1</sup> Boileau, *Art Poet.*, ii. 121.

<sup>2</sup> *op. cit.*, pp. 332-58.



sermons in which they appeared. The imaginary illustrations of the satirist,<sup>1</sup> intended to exhibit the nadir of Spanish taste, were outdone by a hundred actual examples. But if Spain had her Paravicino (whom even Lope de Vega hailed as her Cyril and Chrysostom combined), Italy had her Azzolini, Aresi, and Giuglaris, France her André and Garasse, Germany her Santa Clara and Cober, England her Corbet and King. Others,—the authors of *Holy Living and Holy Dying* and *Death's Duel*,—are perhaps the chief representatives of this style of preaching to survive in English literature, but obscurer men in obscurer places sank to lower levels. Treatises expounding the art soon appeared (the Italian Dell'Epifania gave his the characteristic title of 'The Milky Way'), and innumerable collections of appropriate similes and conceits were published. A Spanish bibliographer enumerates more than forty of the latter in his own country; I have myself noted the titles of almost as many in English; but every language had its own collections. Furetière<sup>2</sup> singles out the German Lycosthenes<sup>3</sup> as the acknowledged leader of this vast array, and a dozen years later Eachard mentions him as the chief storehouse of similes for English sermons.

A natural reaction followed everywhere. In Spain, Cascales,<sup>4</sup> Suárez de Figueroa,<sup>5</sup> and Juan Rodríguez<sup>6</sup> attacked the bad taste of the pulpit, though without apparent effects; and not until the eighteenth century, through the influence of Isla's satiric novel, *Fray Gerundio*,

<sup>1</sup> Isla, *Obras*, in *Bibl. de Autores Españoles*, xv. 101 sq.

<sup>2</sup> op. cit., p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> i. e. Conrad Wolfhart, compiler of *Parabolæ seu Similitudines*, 1557, and *Apophthegmatum sive responsorum memorabilium loci communes*, 1555, both often reprinted.

<sup>4</sup> *Cartas Filológicas*, in *Bibl. de Autores Españoles*, xvi. 532 sq.

<sup>5</sup> *El Pasajero*, Madrid, 1617, dial. iv.

<sup>6</sup> *Simulas de Documentos de la Predicación Evangelica*, Seville, 1640, chap. x.

were sanity and dignity finally restored. In Italy, Sforza Pallavicino, Pellegrini, and others assailed the movement with the weapons of criticism,<sup>1</sup> and the preacher Segneri illustrated the reform in his own later practice. But in France the reaction gained surer and swifter power, as part and parcel of the general movement of classicism; it was defended by less half-hearted argument, and was exemplified by the splendid genius of many preachers. The efforts of Port-Royal, of Le Jeune and Bourgoing, of Bossuet and Bourdaloue, do not specially concern the history of criticism. The influence of the last is said by Voltaire<sup>2</sup> to have been responsible for the transformation of English preaching, and the contemporary statements of Burnet<sup>3</sup> and others bear this out to some extent. But the large mass of critical work devoted to the eloquence of the pulpit as well as to that of the forum deserves some attention.<sup>4</sup> Balzac, who first gave French prose a classical refinement and cadence, seems to have been also the first to attack the 'metaphysical' preaching and to argue for simplicity and dignity.<sup>5</sup> Sirmond,<sup>6</sup> Guéret,<sup>7</sup> Rapin,<sup>8</sup> and La Bruyère,<sup>9</sup> among others, devoted separate treatises to the theory of sacred oratory, all save the last antedating

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, p. xxii, and note.

<sup>2</sup> *Œuvres*, ed. Moland, xli. 278.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Suppl. to Burnet's Hist. of my own Time*, ed. Foxcroft, 1902, pp. 96, 467. Burnet heard Bourdaloue preach in 1664.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Vial and Denise, *Idées et Doctrines littéraires du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 1906, pp. 81-92, 207-14; Arnaud, *Étude sur la Vie et les Œuvres de l'Abbe d'Aubignac*, 1887, p. 96 sq.; and Bourgoing, *Les Maîtres de la Critique au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 1889, pp. 280-311.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. his *Socrate Chrestien*, 6, 7.

<sup>6</sup> *Le Prédicateur*, 1638.

<sup>7</sup> *Entretiens sur l'Éloquence de la Chaire et du Barreau*, 1666.

<sup>8</sup> *Réflexions sur l'Usage de l'Éloquence de ce Temps*, 1672; translated in the same year as *Reflections upon the Eloquence of these Times, particularly of the Bar and Pulpit*. Three other critical works by Rapin were rendered into English before Rymer translated the treatise on poetry in 1674.

<sup>9</sup> 'De la chaire,' in the *Caractères*, 1688.

Glanvill's *Essay concerning Preaching*. All insist on the avoidance of the conceits of Spanish and Italian preachers, and inculcate the same lessons of simplicity, sincerity, piety, naturalness, and good taste. 'There's nothing that a Christian Preacher ought more industriously to avoid,' says Rapin, 'than what is sparkling in Expression or even in Thought. His great Study should be to speak always clearly and unaffectedly. The Oratory of the Temple loves Purity, without hunting after Elegance; is more desirous of Strength than of Beauty; equally declines all gross Negligence and all studied Fineness, and ever takes more Care what it thinks than how it speaks. It looks upon every Thing as false that is too glittering, and will not submit to make use of it. That vain Affectation of Language which corrupts the Purity and Sanctity of the Word of God is in its Account no better than Profaneness. It seeks no other Ornament of Discourse but what is just, and plain, and natural. It much disdains the Humour of studying the Spanish and Italian sermons, to cull out the Wit. Men lose their Time upon these Moderns, only because they are Strangers to the Ancients; and hence they form a wrong Notion of this sacred Eloquence, the Character of which is quite opposite to all labour'd Politeness and all Gaiety of Imagination.'<sup>1</sup> Bouhours is equally severe towards the preachers who indulge in conceits and false thoughts;<sup>2</sup> Boileau's influence also counted for much; and the *pointe*, no longer tolerated in the pulpit, soon ceased to figure in criticism.

In England the tradition of Euphuism seems to have influenced sacred oratory even after it had lost its hold on polite letters;<sup>3</sup> but the 'metaphysical' perversions of

<sup>1</sup> Kennet, *Critical Works of Rapin*, 3rd ed., ii. 96.

<sup>2</sup> *La Manière de bien penser*, ed. 1695, pp. 74-7. Elsewhere in the same treatise Bouhours cites and rebukes Tesauro and Gracián on the subject of conceits.

<sup>3</sup> As early as 1569, a decade before *Euphues*, Richard Taverner

style affected the clergy most seriously about the third or fourth decade of the seventeenth century. In 1643 Howell speaks of this as a 'disease of our time', affecting every one, but most of all the preachers, who had gone mad with a strange vertigo of style.<sup>1</sup> Even Fuller protested, urging the good divine to aim at 'clearness and plainness in all his writings,'<sup>2</sup> and to make his 'similes and illustrations always familiar, never contemptible',<sup>3</sup> but 'not so plain but that the piously learned did admire them'.<sup>4</sup> John Wilkins, later bishop of Chester, went still further, and his *Ecclesiastes, or a Discourse concerning the Gift of Preaching as it falls under the Rules of Art* (which went through nine editions between 1646 and 1695) may be called the first critical expression of the new ideals of clerical taste. His method is expository rather than controversial or destructive; he urges simplicity and naturalness, and ignores for the most part the current perversions of style. The style of the sermon should be 'plain, full, wholesome, affectionate: (1) It must be plain and naturall . . . (2) It must be full, without empty and needless Tautologies . . . (3) It must be sound and wholesome [i. e. without affectation of novelty] . . . (4) It must be affectionate and cordial.'<sup>5</sup>

'appeared in St. Mary's pulpit with his sword by his side (as 'tis said) and a chain of gold hanging about his neck, and preached to the scholars a sermon . . . beginning thus: "Arriving at the mount of St. Mary's, in the stony stage where I now stand, I have brought you some fine biskets baked in the oven of charity, carefully conserv'd for the chickens of the church, the sparrows of the spirit, and the sweet swallows of salvation, &c.'" Which way of preaching was then mostly in fashion, and commended by the generality of scholars.'—Anthony à Wood, *Athen. Oxon.*, ed. 1813, i. 421.

<sup>1</sup> *Familiar Letters*, ed. J. Jacobs, p. 427. I have not seen Henry Jacob's *Position against vainglorious and that which is falsely called Learned Preaching*, 1604.

<sup>2</sup> *Holy State*, 1640, ii. 4. 10.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* ii. 9. 11.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* ii. 10.

<sup>5</sup> *Ecclesiastes*, 1646, pp. 72-4.

It was not until a quarter of a century later that the rough and unsparing invective of Eachard drove the argument home. His *Grounds and Occasions of the Contempt of the Clergy*, to which Macaulay has given renewed fame and which Professor Arber reprinted in his *English Garner*, appeared in 1670, and provoked not only a heated controversy but the publication of many other treatises on the saner art of preaching.<sup>1</sup> He mercilessly derides the 'conceited' preachers, and illustrates their method by absurd examples; their folly seemed to him one of the chief 'grounds of the contempt of the clergy'. The kindred contributions of Barrow,<sup>2</sup> South,<sup>3</sup> Arderne,<sup>4</sup> and Gilbert Burnet<sup>5</sup> are not to be ignored, nor the purity of Tillotson's practice; but Eachard is after all the Jeremy Collier of the corrupt rhetoric of the pulpit. Glanvill, in the *Essay concerning Preaching* (1678), renewed the argument and developed a constructive programme. He owed much to recent French discussions of the same subject, still more to his relations with the Royal Society. The homely and unadorned plainness of its public and private discourse, as explained by Sprat, is Glanvill's ideal; the language of merchants and artisans rather than of wits and scholars. Hard words, abstruse and mysterious notions, the affected use of scraps of Greek and Latin, pretty cadences, fantastic phrases, and rhetorical figures of all kinds fall under his condemnation; the pulpit is not the place for secular eloquence.<sup>6</sup> The conceit was banished from English preaching for ever, but in the process something of fancy

<sup>1</sup> The *Speculum Crape-Gownorum . . . with Reflections on some of the late high-flown Sermons* (2nd ed. 1682), ascribed to John Phillips, is almost wholly plagiarized from Eachard.

<sup>2</sup> Sermon against *Foolish Jestings and Speaking*.      <sup>3</sup> Sermon on *Words*.

<sup>4</sup> *Directions concerning the Matter and Style of Sermons*, 1671.

Preface to More's *Utopia*, and *Discourse of the Pastoral Care*, 1692.  
Cf. Thomas Burnet, *Sacred Theory of the Earth*, 1684, pref. to bk. iii.

<sup>6</sup> ii. 273-7.



and charm was sacrificed to the consuming rage of reason and common sense.<sup>1</sup>

A similar attack was directed against the distortions and intricacies of style in all other forms of literature. The substitution of general for technical terms and imagery,<sup>2</sup> the elimination of the Latin coinages of Browne and his school,<sup>3</sup> the preference for sceptical as opposed to dogmatic modes of thought and speech,<sup>4</sup> a horror of pedantry so great that to Temple the progress of learning itself seemed to be endangered, the attempt to make literature approximate more and more to conversation,<sup>5</sup> the trend toward precision of word and idea,<sup>6</sup>—these are different phases of the same movement, and all find reasoned expression in the criticism of the period.

In polite letters the new school substituted the 'turn' for the 'conceit'. Dryden has told us how his attention was first called to the difference between Waller's and Denham's 'turns of words and thoughts', and Cowley's 'points of wit'.<sup>7</sup> The turn may be one of words or thoughts, but in either case it has its basis in a reality of nature. Therein lies its superiority over the conceit; their difference renews the humanist's opposition between 'words' and 'things'. Rapin justified the turn on the ground that the function of art lies not in the conception but in the proper arrangement of ideas.<sup>8</sup> Butler distinguished between a play on mere words and a play

<sup>1</sup> Toward the end of the century, in France, a discussion arose as to whether preachers should avoid all eloquence, good and bad alike; Du Bois took the position that they should, and Arnould answered him in a letter on *L'Éloquence des Prédicateurs*, 1694 (Sainte-Beuve, *Port-Royal*, v. 469).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. note to ii. 64. 32.

<sup>3</sup> ii. 273-5.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Ker's *Dryden*, i. 124, and Greenslet, *Joseph Glanvill*, pp. 178-92.

<sup>5</sup> Ker, i. 175, &c.

<sup>6</sup> Locke, *Human Understanding*, iii. 11. 10.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Ker, ii. 108, and note, especially the citation from Butler.

<sup>8</sup> Kennet, *Critical Works of Rapin*, ii. 28.

on sense; the 'easiness' of style which the latter gave seemed to him a sham; and, as he rightly foresaw, the fashionable turn soon followed the outworn conceit. In the next century, when the noise of these literary disputes had died away, and simplicity had become universal in cultivated speech, Mandeville ascribed it to the tranquil way of talking adopted by refined society.<sup>1</sup>

The position of Thomas Sprat, later bishop of Rochester, the predecessor of Eachard and Glanvill in this movement, has already been alluded to. His *History of the Royal Society* was published a year, his *Account of the Life and Writings of Cowley* a few months, before the *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*; the significance and influence of this almost simultaneous publication are not difficult to perceive. The *Account*, prefixed to Cowley's collected works, is virtually the first literary biography in English. At least three of Walton's *Lives*, the Duchess of Newcastle's memoir of her husband, and similar biographical sketches had preceded it; but their interest is in the portrayal of a pious or noble life rather than in the development of a literary career, and a critical estimate of their subject's literary work was no part of their scheme. Pellisson's *Discours sur les Œuvres de M. Sarasin*,<sup>2</sup> prefixed to Ménage's edition of Sarasin's works in 1656, seems to have served as Sprat's model; but to the French interest in pure criticism he adds the characteristic English interest in moral character and in biography for its own sake, as illustrated by his predecessors. He sacrifices anecdote and incident to the general impression, however; and his tone is frankly and continuously that of eulogy. His work served as a pattern of its kind long after Cowley's poetic star had

<sup>1</sup> *Fable of the Bees*, 9th ed., ii. 276 sq.

<sup>2</sup> This was translated in 1678, in *A Collection of Select Discourses out of the most eminent Wits of France and Italy*. Pellisson's chief work, the *History of the French Academy*, had been translated in 1657.

set; and Dr. Johnson, though he found fault with it, was indebted to it in his own *Lives of the Poets*. Johnson, however, like Prior, Hume, and many others, did not disguise his admiration for Sprat's prose style.<sup>1</sup>

The *History of the Royal Society*, which seems to have been suggested by Pellisson's similar work on the French Academy,<sup>2</sup> contains the most important of Sprat's critical contributions to the movement toward purity and simplicity of language. His argument in favour of the formation of an English Academy is of high historic interest; but the well-known passage on the Royal Society's manner of discourse is even more so. Its ideal is the expression of 'so many *things* almost in an equal number of *words*'.<sup>3</sup> This is the way in which experimental science, from that day to this, has attempted to express its results, and this in a measure serves to explain its power. But the ideal tended more and more to become that of poetry as well as of expository prose; and Dryden's definition of 'wit' as a propriety of words and thoughts illustrates the result. Though Sprat is primarily concerned with the debates of a scientific society, whose members sought to bring its proceedings 'as near the Mathematical plainness as they can', it is clearly his purpose that his condemnation of rhetorical figures and of all efforts at 'fine speaking', and his preference for 'the language of Artizans, Countrymen, and Merchants before that of Wits or Scholars', should influence literary taste beyond the halls of Gresham College.

Mulgrave, who echoes Dryden's definition of wit, draws the natural conclusions from it in the *Essay on*

<sup>1</sup> For a contemporary study of the prose style of Sprat, Temple, L'Estrange, and Tillotson, in respect to the four standards of propriety, perspicuity, elegance, and cadence, see the essay 'Of Style' (1698) in John Hughes's *Poems on Several Occasions, with some Select Essays in Prose*, 1735, i. 247-55.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. note to ii. 112,

<sup>3</sup> ii. 118,

*Poetry.* This poem illustrates the reaction against the 'sheer wit' of Restoration comedy and the 'noisy nonsense' of the heroic plays; indicates the popular preference for the school of Waller and Denham, and the waning of Cowley's influence; repeats the commonplaces of fancy and judgement, wit and sense, nature and the rules of art, and accepts the critical standards of Boileau and Le Bossu. Mulgrave's distaste for the indecency of Restoration wit, the natural result of his literary purism, provoked Wolseley's reply, the last, and in fact the only, critical defence of the poetic ideals of Rochester and his school. But the social and literary tastes of the nation were favourable to Mulgrave; and in Lansdowne's *Unnatural Flights in Poetry*, a score of years later, St. George was boldly attacking a dead or dying dragon.

## V. THE THEORY OF TRANSLATION

It is perhaps not too much to say that a common impulse directed nearly every form of critical activity in the neo-classic period,—the attempt to discover the secret of the greatness of the classics, and the means by which modern literature could profit by this age-long search. This impulse, which serves in part to explain the significance and the authority of the Rules, explains in like measure the attitude toward the translator's art. With the growth of the Renaissance spirit the problem of translation became more and more of vital significance. The complete conveyance of ancient letters into the vernacular, or the imitation of at least their chief beauties, furnished the only loopholes left by an implicit faith in the superiority of the classics. The humanists of the fifteenth century contented themselves for the most part with turning the Greek classics into Latin; but the tradition of their loose methods was carried over into the next century,

when the practice of vernacular translation became general.<sup>1</sup> With the growth of the critical temper the necessity for a choice between the alternative methods of direct translation and of general imitation was more fully realized. When the movement came to a head in France the respective importance of both these methods was extensively discussed, and always from the point of view of the effect on vernacular language and literature. Thus Du Bellay urged the poets of France to avoid direct translation, by which their own literature could not be benefited, and to adopt the method of imitation, borrowing freely from the classics in original work, and transmuting the material borrowed into blood and nourishment.<sup>2</sup> This was the constant precept of the theorist to the creative artist. Vida frankly urges the complete spoliation of the classics; Scaliger calls it echoing, while Du Bellay speaks of the process as borrowing.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, Pelletier and a host of minor men urged the same claims for faithful translation as were made for a more paraphrastic eclecticism. Since the aim of both borrowing and translating was to enrich the national vernacular rather than to interpret the past or to perfect the work of an individual artist, it mattered little whether a single original was translated with fidelity or whether isolated thoughts were borrowed from many. The function of translation as a mode of interpretation, of conveying the art and thought of one writer into another tongue as adequately as possible, was not considered; translation and imitation alike were defended on the ground of this newly awakened patriotism of Renaissance Europe. The following utterance of Thomas Sibilet, in 1581, is characteristic of a great many others:

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Chapman on Valla, *infra*, p. 70 sq.

<sup>2</sup> *Défense et Illustration de la langue françoise*, 1549, i. 5, 6; cf. Pelletier, *Art Poétique*, 1555, i. 5.

<sup>3</sup> For these and other illustrations, cf. my *Lit. Crit. in the Ren.*, pp. 131-2.



‘Because I have always felt a singular affection for the development, enrichment, and splendour of our French mother-tongue, I have gladly written in it, for I felt I was bound by stronger ties to my own country than to any other. Cicero wrote in his own tongue, and profited by his knowledge of Greek to enrich it; thereby he achieved such supreme excellence that he became a model for posterity, and all have striven to imitate him. . . . The same reasons induced me to translate some of the noblest orations of Cicero, still later the *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* by Philostratus, and more recently the treatise on the art of riding by Federico Grisone of Naples and the treatise of Cesare Fiaschi of Ferrara on the manner in which horses should be bridled, managed, and shod, in order that I might teach you to understand what these books contain. In so doing, I imitated or rather responded to the invitation of the Italians, who have translated books from every language into their mother tongue, and by these means instructed their compatriots in all the arts and sciences, for the purpose of making them conversant with all these matters, and teaching the deepest secrets of philosophy, not only to the ladies, but to the very coopers and tailors of Italy. The ladies of France have already begun to write and speak with distinction concerning letters, manners, nature, and other deep and philosophic concepts; and if these translations of good books continue to be made,—and they are daily increasing,—there is every reasonable likelihood that even our artisans and mechanics will, in the long run, not only equal but even surpass those of Italy and other countries. In fact, our language has already gained the prize among modern tongues; witness the writer [Henri Estienne] who some time ago devoted a complete treatise to proving its pre-eminence. To develop and to enrich our tongue, how many have helped, and from now on can benefit, by the faithful translations of good authors! I have discussed this question at greater length in my *Art Poétique*, in my French Grammar, and in a prefatory epistle to the *Iphigenia* of Euripides, which I have also translated into French verse, so that there is no need now to dwell further upon this subject. And so this work, and every other book which in days to come I may write and translate into our French tongue, will prove to you how desirous I am to help you by every means in my slight

power to further and advance the language and letters of France,'<sup>1</sup>

It will be observed that Sibilet is not concerned with *how* the translation is to be done. The purpose is frankly to convey into French all that the original has said, and that solely for the purpose of enriching French letters and adorning French speech; that the translation must be faithful not unnaturally follows, since an unfaithful translation fails to convey something, at least, that the original contains. As an exercise or mode of training the practice was always esteemed. But there is here no conception of translation as an art in itself; that was the contribution of the seventeenth century.

The Renaissance theory of echoing, stealing, or borrowing from the classics, call it what you will, for the purpose of enriching the vernacular, became in time the basis of the theory of direct translation. Theorists might explain it as the best method of interpreting the real spirit of the author rather than his mere words, but the main object of translation remained always the same, that of conveying to the national literature all the riches of eloquence and thought which Greece and Rome possessed. This explains the number of translators who were members of the French Academy during the first century of its life: they were not merely the interpreters of past forms of thought and experience, they were patrons of French letters, dowering them with the wealth of Greece and Rome. As this conception became more and more diffused, impatience with mere fidelity to the original increased proportionately: justice to a dead author counted for little in comparison with justice to the living tongue. The actual practice of the sixteenth century had never been strikingly literal, and at one of the early meetings of the Academy, Meziriac

<sup>1</sup> *Contramours: L'Antéros ou Contramour de Messire Baptiste Fulgose*, &c., Paris, 1581, preface.

read a paper 'De la Traduction', in which he charged Amyot's translation of Plutarch with two thousand mistakes.<sup>1</sup> But this concern in regard to specific discrepancies between translation and original was soon dissipated; and a theory of paraphrase, which indeed professed to aim at the author's real intention rather than at his mere words, but which was really concerned with the nuances of the French language rather than with the sense of the original, was gradually developed.<sup>2</sup> The creator of this new method and the theory which justified it seems to have been Malherbe, in his version of the thirty-third book of Livy; but the standard-bearer responsible for the influence and diffusion of both method and theory was Perrot d'Ablancourt. His translations of Greek and Latin authors rapidly succeeded one another, and each was preceded by a preface in which he defined and defended his method. In 1640, in the preface to the first part of his translation of the *Annals* of Tacitus, he confesses that he has omitted or softened some of the more daring phrases of Tacitus,

'For my French does not command the same respect as his Latin, and things which are frequently admired in him will not be pardoned in me. In many places I have followed him step by step, and rather as a slave than as a companion, although I might have given myself much more liberty, since I am translating not a passage but a book, of which all the parts should be united together and welded into a single organism. Moreover, the diversity of the two languages is so great, no less in the

<sup>1</sup> This paper, which was read Dec. 10, 1635 (Pellisson, *Hist. de l'Acad. fr.*, ed. 1672, p. 104), is printed in *Menagiana*, ed. 1729, ii. 411.

<sup>2</sup> The Italians had already developed the loose and paraphrastic theory of translation; cf. Marino's preface to *La Sampogna*, Paris, 1620: 'By translating, I do not mean the reproduction of the original word by word, but a paraphrastic process by which the circumstances assumed by the author are changed, and the accidental features altered, without injury to the substance of the original sentiment.' But the French were responsible for the European currency of the theory in the seventeenth century.

construction and form of the periods than in the rhetorical figures and other ornaments, that it is necessary to change completely the form and expression in order to avoid creating a monster; and such for the most part translations ordinarily are, either dead and languishing, or confused and tangled, without order or charm. It is therefore necessary to take care not to lose an author's grace by too much scrupulousness, and for fear of betraying him in a trifle to be unfaithful to him in everything. This is especially so when one is creating a work that is to replace the original, and is not intended to help the young to understand Greek and Latin.'

In dedicating his translation of Lucian to Conrart in 1654, he says :

'I do not always limit myself to the words or even to the thoughts of this author; but mindful solely of his purpose, I accommodate everything to the French air and manner. Different times demand not only different words but different thoughts; and ambassadors are accustomed to dress in the fashion of the country to which they are sent, for fear of appearing ridiculous to those whom it is their chief duty to please. This may not properly be translation, but it is worth more than translation, and the Ancients translated in no other way. . . . How well does the *obscuram diligentiam* of Terence describe the fault of over-scrupulous versions, of which one must read the original in order to understand the translation!'

In his complete version of Tacitus, in 1665, he goes so far as to say that an injustice is done to a translation by comparing it with its original.

'The example of Virgil and the ancient comic writers,' he proceeds, 'proves that the best way to attain the glory of one's original is not to follow it step by step, but to seek the beauties of one's native tongue, just as the original sought those of his own; in a word, not so much to consider what he says as what ought to be said, and to consider his intention more than his words. This is why Cicero, who is a great master of eloquence, in translating the orations of Aeschines and Demosthenes, says that he has done it *non ut interpres sed ut orator*,

knowing well that he could succeed in no other way. And truly the passages in which my translation languishes most are the most faithful, if indeed it is fidelity to destroy what is most beautiful in an author, his force and eloquence, merely to preserve the significance of every term, which is the task of a grammarian only.'

This conception of the translator's duty was re-enforced by the charm of Perrot d'Ablancourt's work, and the literature of the century is filled with the praises of his *belles infidèles*. Balzac,<sup>1</sup> Tallemant des Réaux,<sup>2</sup> Saint-Évremond,<sup>3</sup> and others expressed their admiration of his practice and their acceptance of his theory. Gaspard de Tende adopted Perrot's work as the foundation of his *Traité de la Traduction* in 1660. Later in the century, however, Amelot de la Houssaye attacked Perrot's version of Tacitus, and printed the latter side by side with his own; <sup>4</sup> and Perrot's ideals of the translator's art were gradually but slowly superseded.

In the Elizabethan age and the period immediately following it there were two distinct schools of translation. Jonson was the recognized exponent of the literal theory, and as late as 1627 he praised May's *Lucan* for having

'brought  
Lucan's whole frame unto us, and so wrought  
As not the smallest joint or gentlest word  
In the great mass or machine there is stirred.'

It is needless to say that he was not without followers, and a quarter of a century later Marvell characterized as 'translation's thief' the translator who added to, or sub-

<sup>1</sup> *Œuvres*, ii. 573.

<sup>2</sup> *Historiettes*, ed. 1862, iv. 50-1.

<sup>3</sup> *Works*, London, 1714, ii. 54.

<sup>4</sup> *La Morale de Tacite*, 1686, translated into English in the following year as *The Modern Courtier*, and answered immediately in *M. Perrot d'Ablancourt vengé*. For an account of the French treatises on translation, see Goujet, *Bibliothèque française*, 1741, i. 205-19.



tracted from, his original in any particular.<sup>1</sup> The opposing school, which echoed the Horatian protest<sup>2</sup> against too literal translation, was represented by Harington, Chapman, and others.<sup>3</sup> Chapman admits that he has made such changes in his Homeric translations as the difference of tongues demands, and he defends himself on the ground that he is far from taking such liberties as Valla, Badessa, Salel, and the other continental translators of Homer; and it is true that we are still far from the method of 'imitation' or modernized paraphrase, of which Perrot d'Ablancourt is the chief French exemplar.

It was doubtless under the direct influence of France that this new method was adopted in England in the Caroline period. Cowley, in the preface to his *Pindarique Odes*, claims for himself the credit of having introduced the new way; his biographer, Sprat, acknowledges that he was not the first to recommend it, but insists that he was one of the first to practise it.<sup>4</sup> The acknowledged herald of the new method is Sir John Denham in the well-known verses prefixed to Fanshawe's version of the *Pastor Fido* (1647):

'That servile path thou nobly dost decline,  
Of tracing word by word and line by line. . . .  
A new and nobler way thou dost pursue,  
To make Translations and Translators too:  
They but preserve the Ashes, Thou the Flame,  
True to his sense, but truer to his fame.'

In 1656, the year in which Cowley published his *Pindarique Odes*, Denham restated the argument in the prose preface to his *Essay on Translation*, which had been begun much earlier and which is one of the first English attempts to put the theory of loose paraphrase into practice.

<sup>1</sup> Muses' Library ed., i. 106.

<sup>2</sup> *Ars Poet.*, 133 sq.

<sup>3</sup> Gregory Smith, ii. 222, 295-307; cf. *infra*, pp. 70 sq., 77 sq.

<sup>4</sup> ii. 132.

The method soon became current, and had many defenders. Dryden, in 1680, reduced the various modes of translation to three heads, metaphrase, or literal translation ; paraphrase, in which the sense rather than the words of the original is followed ; and imitation, in which both sense and words are altered at will ; and he states his own preference for the second of these methods.

This is the basis of the poem in which Roscommon, a few years later, has dealt with the art of translation. For him, as for the French, the purpose of translation is to convey the ancient treasures into the national store-house of letters ; this England had attempted in emulation of France, but had succeeded better because of the superiority of the vehicle of English speech. The latitude which translators had allowed themselves since the days of Denham seems to have made Roscommon cautious ; he objects to unnecessary digressions and the like. But it is not as an interpreter that the translator is chiefly considered :

‘No longer his *Interpreter*, but *He*.’

In an age in which judgement was valued more highly than fancy, translation seemed to have even higher claims than creative work :

‘And by *Improving* what was writ *Before*,  
*Invention* Labours *Less*, but *Judgment* more.’<sup>1</sup>

Toward the end of the century the chapter ‘Concerning Translations’ in Blount’s *De Re Poetica*, containing citations from Denham, Sprat, Howell, Burnet, Roscommon, and Dryden, emphasizes the unity of seventeenth-century opinion on this subject, and indicates clearly enough how important the task of translation seemed to an age in which the chief problem of criticism was the relation of the classics

<sup>1</sup> ii. 299.

to modern literature. In the next century Dr. Johnson, reviewing the history of translation from the Latins to his own time, distinguishes between that closeness which preserves an author's sense and that freedom which exhibits the author's spirit; Dryden, observing a mean between these two extremes, seemed to him to have fulfilled most perfectly the translator's function.<sup>1</sup> Still later, the historical spirit demanded a still greater fidelity to the original, and the *Looker-on*,<sup>2</sup> in objecting to 'licentious translators', indicated L'Estrange as the worst, but Dryden as the chief.

The gradual divergence of seventeenth-century opinion from the literal conception of translation may be traced through various stages. The attempt to approximate the sense rather than to reproduce the words of the original was justified by the advice of Horace. But from an author's sense to his spirit, from his spirit to his 'fame', and from his fame to a new work intended to replace his own, is a far cry. It is to be remembered, however, that the seventeenth century had no conception of the historical or scientific functions of translation. The purpose of translating a classic was not to further the understanding of outworn modes of thought and experience, or even the subtler appreciation of undying forms of art. The ultimate motive, as we have seen, was always the creation of a new work of art, which could be enjoyed in itself, and which would enrich English letters with the flower and fruit of ancient eloquence. 'Translation,' said Edward Howard, 'adds some perfection to a language, because it introduces the wit of others into its own words, as the French have of late done well in theirs.'<sup>3</sup> Or as Rossetti has restated the old plea in the language of our own day: 'The only true

<sup>1</sup> *Idler*, nos. 68, 69 (1759).

<sup>2</sup> No. 61 (1793). Cf. A. F. Tytler (Lord Woodhouselee), *Essay on the Principles of Translation*, 1791, ch. iii, iv.

<sup>3</sup> Preface to the *Womens Conquest*, 1671.

motive for putting poetry into a fresh language must be to endow a fresh nation, as far as possible, with one more possession of beauty.' <sup>1</sup>

## VI. WIT AND HUMOUR

The term 'wit', as we have seen, had come to include such imaginative elements as seventeenth-century poetry admitted; and by a natural opposition with the slower and preciser processes of the intellect, it had received a particular application to liveliness and quickness of fancy. In this antithesis of wit and judgement the 'metaphysical' tradition and the new movement of science met face to face. In the lighter forms of literature wit assumed the special form of 'sheer wit' or 'repartee', that is, wit adapted to the uses of comedy and social converse. Here too the free play of fancy was opposed by a method of observation and judgement. In the controversy between Shadwell and Dryden, and in many other contemporary discussions, Restoration wit, in this form especially of 'sheer wit' or 'repartee', clashed with the tradition of the Jonsonian 'humours'. It is important that at least some of the results of this clash should be studied.

At the end of the sixteenth century all of the nations of Europe were alike in possessing the term 'humour' in its primal medical sense as one of the four cardinal or constituent elements of the make-up of man. The old physicians had enumerated four,—blood, phlegm, bile, and black bile. On these depended the individual disposition of men, whether sanguine, phlegmatic, choleric, or melancholy; and by a natural extension of the sense the word was used throughout Europe for disposition or temperament in general. But the sense in which it is used by Ben Jonson implies a further extension of meaning, and

<sup>1</sup> Preface to *The Early Italian Poets*, 1861.

relates not merely to the general disposition of men but to singularities of character by which one man is distinguished from all the other members of his race. Jonson himself, in the Induction of *Every Man out of his Humour*, after expounding the medical notion of a humour, says :

‘It may by metaphor apply itself  
Unto the general disposition :  
As when some one peculiar quality  
Doth so possess a man, that it doth draw  
All his effects, his spirits, and his powers,  
In their confluxions, all to run one way,  
This may be truly said to be a humour.’<sup>1</sup>

It is to be observed from this definition that a humour in the Jonsonian sense is not of necessity the possession of every man, for all do not possess one peculiar quality which draws all effects, spirits, and powers to run in one way ; though this does not imply that in Jonson’s own philosophy every man has not his humour, as Pope insists that every man has his ‘ruling passion’. The term has therefore been specialized beyond its original sense of the disposition or temperament ; and though the conception of the word even in this sense is not English only, but European, its application as the special province of comedy is the work of Jonson’s genius. Continental comedy was concerned with conventional types illustrating the Horatian *decorum* of age, profession, rank, and the like, or in some cases the humours of temperament or disposition, but not the overwhelming singularity of the Jonsonian humour. This Dryden saw, and in the *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* he says :

‘As for the French, though they have the word *humeur* among them, yet they have small use of it in their comedies or farces ; they being but ill imitations of the *ridiculum*, or that which stirred up laughter in the Old Comedy. But among the English ’tis otherwise : where by humour is meant some

<sup>1</sup> For other Jonsonian *loci* see Gregory Smith, *Eliz. Crit. Essays*, ii. 462.



extravagant habit, passion, or affection, particular (as I said before) to some one person, by the oddness of which he is immediately distinguished from the rest of men ; which being lively and naturally represented, most frequently begets that malicious pleasure in the audience which is testified by laughter, as all things which are deviations from common customs are ever the aptest to produce it ; though by the way this laughter is only accidental, as the person represented is fantastic or bizarre ; but pleasure is essential to it, as the imitation of what is natural. The description of these humours, drawn from the knowledge and observation of particular persons, was the peculiar genius and talent of Ben Johnson.' <sup>1</sup>

The problem which confronts all students of the seventeenth century is the development of the term from the humours, conceived merely as singular traits of character, to humour, conceived as a special quality of mind and art. Sir William Temple, in his essay *Of Poetry*, is responsible for the assertion, so often repeated, that in this its modern sense the word is 'peculiar to our Language, and hard to be expressed in any other', and that the quality itself is 'a Vein natural perhaps to our Country . . . nor is it to be found in any foreign Writers unless it be Molière'. Congreve says much the same thing in his letter to Dennis (1696), and the Swiss, B  at de Muralt, who visited England at about this time, tells us that the idea was then universally accepted.<sup>2</sup> Swift, however, in the third number of the *Intelligencer* (1728), distinguishes between the word and the thing, as Dryden had done, but reverses Dryden's judgement :

'I agree with Sir William Temple that the word is peculiar to our English tongue, but I differ from him in the opinion that the thing itself is peculiar to the English nation, because the contrary may be found in many Spanish, Italian, and French

<sup>1</sup> Ker, i. 85.

*Lettres sur les Anglais et sur les Fran  ais*, 1725 (Engl. transl., London, 1726, p. 28).

productions, and particularly, whoever hath a taste for true humour will find a hundred instances of it in those volumes printed in France, under the name of *Le Théâtre Italien*, to say nothing of Rabelais, Cervantes, and many others.'

Temple's assertion became a conventional inheritance of polite literature,<sup>1</sup> and was widely current even on the Continent from Muralt's day to Herder's.<sup>2</sup>

Voltaire was the first to call attention to the fact that the word as well as the quality was not the exclusive possession, or indeed the creation, of English literature :

'Ils [les Anglais] ont un terme pour signifier cette plaisanterie, ce vrai comique, cette gaieté, cette urbanité, ces saillies qui échappent à un homme sans qu'il s'en doute ; et ils rendent cette idée par le mot *humeur*, *humour*, qu'ils prononcent *yumor* ; et ils croient qu'ils ont seuls cette *humeur* ; que les autres nations n'ont point de terme pour exprimer ce caractère d'esprit. Cependant c'est un ancien mot de notre langue, employé en ce sens dans plusieurs comédies de Corneille.'<sup>3</sup>

In Corneille's *Suite du Menteur* (1643) there is a striking illustration of Voltaire's contention :

'*Cliton* : Par exemple, voyez, aux traits de ce visage  
Mille dames m'ont pris pour homme de courage,  
Et sitôt que je parle, on devine à demi  
Que le sexe jamais ne fut mon ennemi.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Campbell, *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, bk. i, sect. ii (ed. 1823, p. 29, n.), and the *Looker-on*, no. 61, July 13, 1793.

<sup>2</sup> E. g. Charles de Brosses, *Traité de la formation mécanique des langues*, 1765, cited by Voltaire, *Dict. Phil.* s. v. *Langues* ; and Herder, *Sämmtliche Werke: Zur schönen Lit. und Kunst*, ed. 1829, xvi, 123, 136. I am indebted for some of these details to an article by Benedetto Croce, the distinguished historian of aesthetics, in the *Journal of Comparative Literature*, New York, 1903, i. 222 ; for the later history of the term 'humour', see Baldensperger, *Études d'Histoire littéraire*, Paris, 1907, pp. 176-222.

<sup>3</sup> Letter to the Abbé d'Olivet, written 20 August 1761, and printed in October of the same year in the *Journal Encyclopédique* (*Œuvres*, ed. Moland, xli. 405).

*Cléandre* : Cet homme a de l'*humeur*.

*Dorante* : C'est un vieux domestique,

Qui, comme vous voyez, n'est pas mélancolique.

A cause de son âge il se croit tout permis ;

Il se rend familier avec tous mes amis . . .

Souvent il importune, et quelquefois il plait.

*Cléandre* : J'en voudrais connoître un de l'*humeur* dont il est.<sup>1</sup>

Here, in a single passage, the word is found in the two senses current in English speech during the later seventeenth century. It was in France, then, that the term was first extended, from its secondary sense of singularity of character, to its third (and in England its final) sense of the keen perception, or the unconscious expression, of the odd and incongruous. In this latter sense it apparently lost currency in France about the middle of the century ; and later, when used absolutely, it came to signify bad humour. This transformation contrasts strikingly with the later history of the word in England : there individuality and even eccentricity became consciously the province of an amusing and sympathetic art ; and while La Bruyère insisted that the dramatist should portray not men but Man, Temple praised English comedy for its faithful studies of individual men. There is this much truth in Blair's variation on Temple's theme, at the end of the eighteenth century :

'Humour is, in a great measure, the peculiar province of the English nation. The nature of such a free government as ours, and that unrestrained liberty which our manners allow to every man, of living entirely after his own taste, afford full scope to the display of singularity of character, and to the indulgence of humour in all its forms. Whereas, in France, the influence of a despotic court, the more established subordination of ranks,

<sup>1</sup> Act iii, sc. 1. Further discussion of the early French use of the word in its modern English sense will be found in Génin, *Récréations philologiques*, 1856, i. 213 sq.

and the universal observance of the forms of politeness and decorum spread a much greater uniformity over the outward behaviour and characters of men. Hence comedy has a more ample field, and can flow with a much freer vein, in Britain than in France.’<sup>1</sup>

In the evolution of the term from its older to its modern meaning, the early stages of the controversy between Shadwell and Dryden represent perhaps the crisis. Humour, face to face with wit, shook off its accidental and factitious elements, and assumed the vital character which it has ever since preserved. But the significance of this long discussion does not consist merely in the precision given to a single critical concept. From the earliest days of the Restoration criticism had concerned itself with the distinguishing and purely national characteristics of English literature, and it was now gradually enabled to seek for more vital elements of difference than the older criteria permitted.

## VII. THE SCHOOL OF SENSE: RYMER

The arguments of French criticism were fully introduced into England in the *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*. The combination of respect for authority and freedom of critical examination follows the general tendency of classicism in France, and the urbane tone of conversation and discussion is in agreement with the spirit of the best French prose. The *Essay* has its highest distinction, however, in the luminous application of these criteria to English literature; and the result is an achievement of national import, a work more rounded and acute, more observant of the true critical temper, than any one of the foreign models to which it owes its ideas. Corneille was the master who

<sup>1</sup> *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles-Lettres*, lect. xlvii (ed. 1820, iii. 348). B  at de Muralt, in the *Lettres sur les Anglais* (ed. cit., p. 20), ascribes the inferiority of English comedy to these very causes.

gained Dryden's special respect; the vacillating compromises of his long duel with Aristotle (the phrase is M. Lemaître's) found an echo in Dryden's heart; but the *discours* and *examens* of Corneille are as thoroughly French as the *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* is essentially English.

But for a brief period this free play of the intellect was threatened; and the epilogue and the 'Defence of the Epilogue', appended to the second part of the *Conquest of Granada*, in 1672, represent the extent to which Dryden gradually succumbed to the *eidola* of the day. The overbearing tone of superiority which these utterances evinced toward the earlier dramatists served as a challenge to many of his contemporaries,<sup>1</sup> and Dryden himself outgrew this phase of his critical career. But his attitude toward Shakespeare, Fletcher, and Jonson survived in English criticism in the work of another, who shared his literary authority for at least two decades, who intensified the spirit of his revolt against English traditions, and who moved him both to submission and to reaction.

Rymer, like Dryden, began his critical work by attaching himself to the tradition of Davenant and Hobbes. He adopted the preference of Hobbes for history and critical comparison rather than for rules; and his *Preface to Rapin*, like the preface to *Gondibert*, outlines the history of the epic. But Rymer extends and intensifies their method. His contemporaries realized the importance of his first work, even if we do not; it gave him, as the publisher of Rapin's *Whole Critical Works* could say years later, as much fame as the work which it introduced in English dress had given Rapin. The *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* had preceded it by a half-dozen years, but Rymer's preface, though it lacks Dryden's charm, was really the introduction of Englishmen to the study of poetry by concrete illustration

<sup>1</sup> Cf. ii. 284. 24 sq., and note.



and comparison. It is a striking fact that, prior to 1674, scarcely a line of English verse had been quoted for the purpose of critical analysis and discussion,—scarcely a line of poetry in any tongue, it might almost be said, except for the sake of ornament or argument, or to illustrate the rules of language or versification. In the *Defence of the Epilogue*, for example, Dryden quotes his predecessors merely to find fault with their grammar or to ridicule their puns.

The specific method which Rymer adopted was not his own. Macrobius and especially Scaliger had furnished him his three initial illustrations of the description of Night, and with them the method of comparing such 'commonplaces'.<sup>1</sup> But Rymer was the first Englishman to adopt this method of illustrating the poetic quality of the great works of the imagination by the treatment of set themes, and to add illustrations from the modern tongues: in this he furnishes an early example of comparative criticism. The mingled motives of flattery and patriotism possibly determine his final verdict in Dryden's favour; but in every case he makes a conscious effort to deal rather with 'the Niceties of *Poetry* than any of the little trifles of *Grammar*'.<sup>2</sup> The spirit of his later work is already here: the method is analytical, and the criterion common sense. He approaches each passage with two questions: first and foremost, does the poet describe nature and life exactly as they appear to the reasonable man? and incidentally, with what poetic artifice has this been done? He notes every instance in which the poet fails to make the conditions of poetry approximate as closely as possible to those of actual life, or in which the conclusions of common sense are disturbed.

But it is something to have transferred the concrete beauties of poetry to the pages of criticism, something to have illustrated that criticism by comparison which Saint-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. ii. 174, and notes.

<sup>2</sup> ii. 179.

Évremond<sup>1</sup> was urging as a substitute for criticism by precept and rule, and to have anticipated that method of judging by particulars, by examples and illustrations, which Hume<sup>2</sup> in the next century advocated as the only useful kind of criticism. In the chronological survey of English non-dramatic poetry which precedes these comparisons, and in which there is some show of historical perspective, Rymer attempts to sum up the individual qualities of such poets as Spenser, Cowley, and Davenant. His method and spirit are those of Rapin, with something of the earlier English freedom; he incorporates the passage on the liberty of poets which Jonson had translated from Heinsius. Here neo-classical subservience to ancient authority yields absolutely to the spirit of rationalism.

The two ideas that were to determine his attitude toward literature and to find continuous expression in his critical work are already in this early preface: these masquerade under the names of 'nature' and 'sense', and something must be said of both. Every school of criticism and philosophy has professed to found its doctrine on nature, and every school can sustain this position if it is permitted to define the term in its own way. Campbell protested against the romantic use of the word to signify scenery or the mere pageantry of the country: it involves 'nature moral as well as external', 'life in all its circumstances'.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, Hurd pointed out the converse limitation of the neo-classical use of the word.<sup>4</sup> But these protests and extensions of significance help us little; if the word must be understood in Campbell's or Hurd's sense, classicists or romanticists, as the case might be,

<sup>1</sup> *Works*, London, 1714, iii. 148.

<sup>2</sup> Essay xix.

<sup>3</sup> *Essay on English Poetry*, prefixed to *Specimens of the British Poets*, 1819.

<sup>4</sup> *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, 1762, x.

would have none of it, and would adopt some other term to express the vital materials of poetry. The important thing is to find the content given to the term by any school, and we shall then find the basis of its literary theory.

The seventeenth century did not invent but inherited the classical injunction to 'follow nature'; Seneca's phrase<sup>1</sup> was echoed by Vida,<sup>2</sup> Montaigne,<sup>3</sup> Charron,<sup>4</sup> and a host of others; the neo-classicists accepted it as part of their ancient heritage, and made it serve their own uses. It is not always easy to define the content they give to the idea. Sometimes its meaning is as extensive as Campbell's, sometimes it approximates to the Shakespearean sense.<sup>5</sup> But there is a characteristic, even fundamental sense, which makes the term especially applicable to literary criticism. 'J'ay plustost suyui les mouuements de la Nature réglée que ceux de la vague Imagination,' says Chapelain in the preface to his heroic poem, *La Pucelle*; and this is the key of the whole matter: the universe conceived as governed by law, with general human nature as a microcosm of this mechanical order on the one side, man's mere whim on the other. So Rymer distinguishes nature alike from romance<sup>6</sup> (i. e. 'la vague Imagination') and from mere historic fact<sup>7</sup> (i. e. nature not 'réglée'); and something of the same connotation still subsists in such phrases as 'an unnatural mother' and the like. The century's outlook on life is summed up in a single critical term; no wonder then that the term should limit itself more and more to the specific interests of the age,—to that social order which seemed the best safeguard against individual whim, and to the regulated life of cities,—and

<sup>1</sup> Epist. 90, and pref. to *De Sapientia*; cf. Quintilian, *Inst.* viii. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *De Arte Poetica*, ii. 455 sq.

<sup>3</sup> *Essais*, iii. 12, 13.

<sup>4</sup> *De la Sagesse*, ii. 3. 7.

<sup>5</sup> *Winter's Tale*, iv. 4. 89 sq.

<sup>6</sup> ii. 199.

<sup>7</sup> ii. 253-4.

that these should extend themselves in their turn until they seemed commensurate with nature itself. Civilized society was governed by the same order and law which seventeenth-century science was discovering in the physical universe, and the social code therefore represented the equivalent of 'nature' in man's life. It was on this side that the Horatian 'decorum' connected itself with 'nature'. When Johnson<sup>1</sup> distinguished custom from nature, when Houdar de la Motte<sup>2</sup> distinguished between the natural and the *naïf*, and Shenstone<sup>3</sup> between natural and sentimental, they were not merely making distinctions of terms or adding to our knowledge; they were giving a new interpretation of life itself, such as the previous century would not accept. 'Wenn Künstler von Natur sprechen,' said Goethe, 'subintelligieren sie immer die Idee, ohne sich's deutlich bewusst zu sein.' The mechanical universe of the philosophy of Hobbes and Locke is thus the basis of seventeenth-century criticism; and the sense of mechanical order in nature was implicit in all thought. This was the highest justification of the Rules: they represent the order that is found in nature; they are 'nature still, but nature methodized'. Rapin<sup>4</sup> is the original source of this statement, and Dryden<sup>5</sup> and Dennis<sup>6</sup> accept it as implicitly as Pope.<sup>7</sup> Contemporary philosophy found a rational order in the world, and criticism insisted that this order must be reproduced in books.

The neo-classical injunction to 'follow nature' implies, then, that the laws of poetry must approximate as closely as possible to the laws of life. This explains Rymer's

<sup>1</sup> *Rambler*, no. 146, August 10, 1751.

<sup>2</sup> *Œuvres*, 1754, ix. 37.

<sup>3</sup> *Works*, ed. 1769, ii. 237, iii. 310-12.

<sup>4</sup> *Réfl. sur la Poétique*, pref., i. 12, ii. 33.

<sup>5</sup> *Ker*, i. 228.

<sup>6</sup> *Impartial Critick*, 1693, p. 49; cf. *Letters upon several Occasions*, 1696: 'The Rules are nothing but an observation of Nature. For Nature is Rule and Order itself.'

<sup>7</sup> *Essay on Criticism*, 88-9.

wildest generalizations no less than our disapproval of them. When he says that 'Poetry will allow no provocation or injury where it allows no revenge',<sup>1</sup> or that 'Poetical decency will not suffer death to be dealt to each other by such persons whom the Laws of Duel allow not to enter the lists together',<sup>2</sup> it is not merely that we disagree with the outlook on life which these generalizations imply; though we no longer approve of the duel, its ancient code even to-day does not provoke a smile. Our real disagreement is with his theory of poetry, with the conception of *decorum*<sup>3</sup> of which these statements are logical consequences, rather than with his etiquette or his theory of life; we no longer sympathize with this absolute approximation of the conditions of poetic invention to the conditions of actual and contemporary life. This is to say that we no longer determine the relation between art and nature by common sense.

'Sense,' 'good sense,' 'common sense' obtained their critical vogue in England during the last thirty years of the seventeenth century, and the original instrument of their power seems to have been the philosophy of Hobbes. 'Le bon sens' was constantly used in French criticism from about the time of the Abbé d'Aubignac; Molière, in the *Critique de l'École des Femmes* (1663), first adopted it as a standard sufficient in itself for the critical discussion of literature. But the school of common sense in English criticism was born with the *Rehearsal* (1671), and this, even more than the theory of Rapin, determined Rymer's attitude toward poetry. Johnson's comment on the play, that 'it has not wit enough to keep it sweet', which became later, 'it

<sup>1</sup> ii. 199.

<sup>2</sup> ii. 195.

<sup>3</sup> Rymer's theory of *decorum*, or 'poetical decency', involving especially the poetic treatment of kings and princes, womanhood, the duel, and the like, came to him straight from Scaliger, La Mesnardière, and Corneille; see note to ii. 195. 1 sq.



has not vitality enough to preserve it from putrefaction,'<sup>1</sup> misses the point ; it is not to be judged merely as a burlesque, but as a critical work, and Shaftesbury considered it from this point of view when he said that it had furnished England with the best methods and best phrases of criticism.<sup>2</sup> With it 'common sense has won the day'.<sup>3</sup>

Rymer speaks reverently of 'sense' in the *Preface to Rapin*, and definitely adopts the attitude of the *Rehearsal* in the *Tragedies of the Last Age*. If the play itself occupies no place in either, it is because in 1674 he was courting Dryden's favour and in 1678 he was Dryden's friend. But in the *Short View* he acknowledges his allegiance: 'We want a law for Acting the *Rehearsal* once a week, to keep us in our sense.'<sup>4</sup> In the *Tragedies of the Last Age*, though he professes to judge 'by the practice of the ancients and by the common sense of all ages', common sense is his supreme guide. He casually mentions the unities,<sup>5</sup> justifying them as necessary deductions from common sense. But he specifically says that he does not intend to consider the rules ; they are 'beauties' and not 'essentials'. Common sense does in fact lead him to accept most of these 'beauties', but his interest is not essentially in them. Learning and a knowledge of critical theory, even experience, are unnecessary to a critical judgement: '*common sense suffices* ; and rarely have I known the Women-judges mistake in these points, when they have the patience to think.'<sup>6</sup> This is the apogee of rationalism, and the antipodes of a merely subservient classicism ; the latter found in the ancients reason and nature in perfection, and therefore accepted classical practice as a better

<sup>1</sup> Boswell's *Johnson*, ed. Hill, iv. 369.

<sup>2</sup> *Characteristicks*, 1711, i. 259.

<sup>3</sup> Shadwell, *Works*, iv. 119.      <sup>4</sup> *Short View of Tragedy*, 1693, p. 158.

<sup>5</sup> *Trag. of the Last Age*, p. 24 ; cf. *Short View of Tragedy*, pp. 160-1.

<sup>6</sup> ii. 183, and notes.

guide than unaided reason or disordered nature. Rymer did not find his theory in Corneille, d'Aubignac, or Rapin; English sense and independence could sympathize with the bourgeois spirit of Molière, and prefer reasonableness to rules and theories. If Rymer, fifteen years later, could advocate the use of the chorus in tragedy, he was not disloyal to his older attitude; the practice of Racine and the arguments of Dacier had indeed justified it; but its attractiveness for him lay in the fact that it prevented the poet from juggling with sense;<sup>1</sup> with it the two Kings of Brentford could not ascend into the clouds and return to dance a Coranto.<sup>2</sup>

This conception of nature and common sense dominates Rymer's famous (or notorious) critiques of the Elizabethan dramatists. In both the *Tragedies of the Last Age* and the *Short View of Tragedy* the outlook is essentially the same. In the long interval between the two Rymer had added to the stores of his antiquarian knowledge, and developed the historical point of view which he so perversely used. He had studied early English and Romance poetry, and had become acquainted with the leaders of critical thought and scholarship, living and dead, Castelvetro and Tassoni, Huet and Guéret, Pellisson and Dacier. Five of the eight chapters of the *Short View* (somewhat less than half the bulk of the book) are devoted to research in literary history: here he is a pioneer in England in a field which had been tilled by Pasquier, Ménage, Redi,<sup>3</sup> and other continental scholars whose work he knew.

Both these works, unlike the *Preface to Rapin*, are concerned with the drama, but the concreteness of their method was already foreshadowed in his earliest essay. In the later books, perhaps even more than ever, Rymer is un-

<sup>1</sup> ii. 209.

<sup>2</sup> ii. 210. 21-5, and note.

<sup>3</sup> Rymer derived his Provençal quotations chiefly from Redi's *Annotations to Bacco in Toscana*, 1685.

willing to get very far from particulars: he sticks as closely as possible to the text or the plot. And this interest in the concrete serves him in good stead in his dramatic criticism. Mr. Hannay has recently pointed out how untheatrical Dryden's dramatic criticism is.<sup>1</sup> 'Tis my ambition to be read,' Dryden himself confessed; 'that, I am sure, is the more lasting and the nobler design.'<sup>2</sup> A similar objection does not apply to Rymer. He accepts the physical fact that plays are intended to be acted, and deals with them in connexion with the actual stage and with the great actors of his own time.

The Italian critic, Lodovico Castelvetro, is responsible for this attitude toward the drama. Aristotle, in four distinct passages of the *Poetics*, insisted that plays must be considered by the critic primarily without reference to their representation on the stage;<sup>3</sup> in 1570 his commentator, Castelvetro, founded a complete dramatic theory on the physical conditions of the theatre.<sup>4</sup> The Elizabethan playwrights could naturally sympathize with a theory according to which the stage and not the printed page is the proper setting for a play;<sup>5</sup> and Bacon attributed the heightened effect of the acted drama to the fact that the minds of men are more easily moved and roused 'congregate than solitary'.<sup>6</sup> Flecknoe's *Discourse of the English Stage*, poor a thing as it is, seems to be the first formal piece of theatrical criticism in our tongue. Rymer knew Castelvetro well,<sup>7</sup> and from him and from d'Aubignac learnt lessons

<sup>1</sup> *The Later Renaissance*, 1898, p. 227 sq.

<sup>2</sup> Ker, i. 248.

<sup>3</sup> *Poet.*, vi. 19; vii. 6; xiv. 1, 2; xxvi. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *infra*, pp. 250-1; Fusco, *Poetica di L. Castelvetro*, pp. 159-65; and my *Lit. Crit. in the Ren.* p. 71 sq. Scaliger was of quite another opinion (*Poet.*, i. 5): 'Profecto nihilominus Comoedia est, etiam quum legitur vel tacitis oculis.'

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Marston's preface to the *Malcontent*, 1604, Webster's preface to the *Devil's Law-Case*, 1623, &c.

<sup>6</sup> See *infra*, note to p. 6.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *Short View of Tragedy*, p. 53.

in stage-craft. But their ideas were not systematically developed until the end of the eighteenth century:<sup>1</sup> Diderot and Lessing prepared the way for the Schlegels and Grillparzer, and these in turn for their more radical successors of our own time, Francisque Sarcey, Brunetière, and Mr. Brander Matthews. Not even these critics could insist more on show and action, on the suppression of mere poetry, on dramaturgic skill, than their much contemned predecessor in seventeenth-century England.

It is unnecessary to summarize the dramatic theory on which Rymer has founded his critiques of Shakespeare, Beaumont and Fletcher, and Jonson. The theory, such as it is, owes much to the *Poétique* of La Mesnardière, the *Pratique du Théâtre* of the Abbé d'Aubignac, and more especially the *discours* and the *examens* of Corneille: its ultimate source is Aristotle's *Poetics*, as interpreted by the Italians. Rymer was thoroughly acquainted with the *Poetics*, and he cites it often in both books. Dacier's edition of it, which appeared in 1692, influenced his interpretation of it in the *Short View*; and in his preface Rymer couples Dacier with Le Bossu as the reformers of modern criticism. The groundwork of his whole theory is to be found in the idea of 'poetical justice'. This term Rymer seems to have invented: he used it first in 1678,<sup>2</sup> and Dryden adopted it in the following year.<sup>3</sup> It is of course the 'distributive justice' of Aristotelian ethics; but I can find no critical term in any continental tongue which is exactly equivalent to it. Applied to tragedy, the conception is wholly un-Aristotelian. Plato<sup>4</sup> had indeed insisted on such a dual scheme of rewards and punishments, but Aristotle<sup>5</sup> had declared it unfit for tragedy.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Sheridan, preface to *The Rivals*, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> *Tragedies of the Last Age*, pp. 23, 26.

<sup>3</sup> *Ker*, i. 210.

<sup>4</sup> *Laws*, ii. 660 E.

<sup>5</sup> *Poet.*, xiii. 7, 8.

The elder Scaliger<sup>1</sup> (to whom Rymer owes not a little) had first reconciled Aristotelian theory with poetic justice, and the idea was soon incorporated into French criticism.<sup>2</sup> Corneille refused to accept it, but Dryden parted with him for once, and followed Rymer's example, in the preface to *Troilus and Cressida* and in the dedication of the *Spanish Friar*; though differing with his younger contemporary in many details, Dryden was strongly influenced by him for a short period. The theory found marked confirmation in Bacon's famous passage on poetry, and Bacon's influence was then at its climax. The later history of the idea is well known. Dennis became its chief exponent, before and after the attack in the fortieth *Spectator*; and Dr. Johnson carried on the tradition of Rymer, Dryden, and Dennis.

It is interesting to note the relation between this idea and Rymer's general theory of poetry. Rymer, like Corneille and Dryden, does not adopt the famous Horatian tag in regard to pleasure and profit (*Aut prodesse volunt, aut delectare poetæ*); for all three, pleasure is the chief end of poetry.<sup>3</sup> This contention is as old as the third century B. c., when Eratosthenes maintained that the object of poetry is to charm the mind and not to give instruction.<sup>4</sup> The Italians of the sixteenth century followed the Horatian tradition consistently enough (though Minturno added a third element, that of 'moving', to Horace's instruction and delight) until the independent mind of Castelvetro,<sup>5</sup> in 1570, first placed the theory of pleasure on a more or less philosophical basis. From this time the idea found

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.*, iii. 97.      <sup>2</sup> Cf. the preface to Gombauld's *Amaranthe*, 1631.

<sup>3</sup> ii. 206. Shadwell was shocked at Dryden's position: cf. ii. 153.

<sup>4</sup> Cited and controverted by Strabo, *Geog.* i. 2. 3. This was essentially Aristotle's position, but in the *Poetics* itself there is no statement so definite as that of Eratosthenes.

<sup>5</sup> *Poetica d' Aristotele vulgarizzata et sposta*, ed. 1576, pp. 29, 549, 552, 696, &c.



many champions, Giordano Bruno,<sup>1</sup> Tasso,<sup>2</sup> Marino,<sup>3</sup> and especially Guarini, who, in defence of his *Pastor Fido*, wrote *Il Verato* and *Il Verato Secondo*, arguing with remarkable vigour and acuteness for the freedom of the poetic art and its independence of moral and civil philosophy. The irregular playwrights of France adopted the idea with enthusiasm: 'Poetry, and particularly that which is composed for the theatre,' said Ogier in 1628, 'is intended only for pleasure and diversion.'<sup>4</sup> Finally, in 1656, Cowley said that 'to communicate delight to others' is the main end of poetry.<sup>5</sup>

For the seventeenth century, however, the problem had changed. The case set for trial was no longer (even so far back as Marino and Ogier) pleasure versus profit, but pleasure versus the rules. Morals no less than classical precept demanded some check on unlicensed pleasure; not all pleasure, but pleasure restrained by decency and good sense, should be the goal, and the rules assured both sense and decorum. This is the characteristic seventeenth-century argument. Molière brushed it aside in the *Critique de l'École des Femmes*; but Corneille could not, and 'pleasure according to the rules' (*selon les règles*) is his compromise.<sup>6</sup> This is the chief function of the drama; such profit as it affords is to be found in the moral axioms (*sententiae*), in the vivid portrayal of human character, and in the sense of order in the world which is given by the harmonious development of the plot.

It is this last which, nominally at least, determines

<sup>1</sup> *Opere*, ed. Wagner, ii. 315; cf. my *Lit. Crit. in the Ren.*, p. 176.

<sup>2</sup> *Opere*, ed. Rosini, xii. 88.

<sup>3</sup> *Lettere*, ed. 1673, p. 180.

<sup>4</sup> *Ancien Théâtre français*, 1856, viii. 13. Cf. Waller, *Poems*, ed. Drury, p. 224.

<sup>5</sup> ii. 81. 10.

<sup>6</sup> Dedicatory epistle to the *Suite du Menteur*, 1643; *Discours du Poëme Dramatique*, 1660; cf. Lemaître, *Corneille et la Poétique d'Aristote*, 1888, p. 5 sq.

Rymer's position.<sup>1</sup> The neoclassical rules in themselves do not primarily interest him ; common sense (and what is ever so dogmatic as common sense ?) furnishes him with its own laws. But some sense of order in the world the poet must give if he would be true to 'nature'. The seventeenth-century theory of 'nature' virtually confirms the Aristotelian lesson that the poet should represent things, not as they are, but as they should be, or in other words, that he should mould his plot in accordance with a scheme of justice. This is how Rymer can maintain his concept of poetic justice in the face of his acceptance of pleasure as the chief end of poetry. But at bottom, of course, his theory is moralistic, and in the last work it is frankly so : 'The end of all is to shew Virtue in Triumph.'<sup>2</sup> In the *Short View*, also, the exaggerated insistence on formal etiquette which characterizes the *Tragedies of the Last Age* has been transformed into a more natural respect for the social order ; but in both books the criteria of common sense, 'poetical justice', and 'poetical decency' eclipse in importance all other standards of judgement.

The School of Sense influenced literary taste until the very end of the classical period. Mulgrave illustrates its contempt for 'noisy nonsense' and 'sinking nonsense' by an imaginary plot of a bad play, after the fashion set by the *Rehearsal* ; but common sense had already achieved something of its victory, and in the *Essay upon Poetry* more is made of the 'rules of art', of 'nice distinction', 'just coherence', and 'nicer faults'. On this side Mulgrave's point of contact is with Pope. The school of sense had discovered the relations which exist between its own standard and propriety of expression ; we are on the road to 'correctness', in which sense and propriety, no less than reason and authority, are harmonized. Pope thought highly of Rymer ; and Rymer, no less than Dryden and

<sup>1</sup> ii. 206 sq.

<sup>2</sup> *Short View of Tragedy*, p. 49.

Boileau, must be considered in tracing his intellectual ancestry. Hazlitt complained that the word 'sense' occurs too often in the *Essay on Criticism* (as French critics have complained of the excess of both 'sense' and 'reason' in Boileau's *Art Poétique*); and in Pope the poetic principle, 'wit,' and the critical principle, 'taste,' are virtually identified with sense. But the standard could serve no farther. Dennis had already distinguished between poetry which possessed the 'Enthusiastick Spirit' and that which needed only 'a little good Sense and an air of Gaity',<sup>1</sup> and Phillips had stated the claims of the creative imagination.<sup>2</sup> Fontenelle, Houdar de la Motte, Voltaire, Du Bos, and other French critics indicated the limitations of wit and sense; and with Joseph Warton's dedication of his *Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope*, the distinction between these concepts and the poetic imagination became widely current in England.

It has been said that Rymer and Dryden represent two distinct schools of criticism; but it is not sufficient to distinguish these schools merely in respect to their attitude toward the Elizabethans, especially Shakespeare. Though the *Tragedies of the Last Age* seems to answer the *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* with particular reference to Shakespeare, Jonson, and Fletcher, it should be remembered that Rymer's attitude merely intensified a temporary mood of Dryden; and their preference for one or another of these authors, even though symptomatic, illustrates only a side of their real divergence in method and principle. Dryden's clash with Shadwell represents a fundamental divergence in comedy,—in this case, the clash of the schools of 'wit' and 'humour'; on the side of tragedy, where Dryden met Rymer, there was a kindred clash. But, underlying this, there is a difference in their critical methods, though, during

<sup>1</sup> *Miscellanies in Verse and Prose*, 1693, preface.

<sup>2</sup> ii. 271.

one period of his career, Dryden approached more closely to Rymer in manner as well as in ideas.

Dryden taught Englishmen logical reasoning about critical problems ; he was open to ideas ; his temperament was Socratic and sceptical ; his strength lay in argument. He taught his countrymen a critical dialectic, and taught it so well that a young man like Wolseley could wield it with skill and power. Rymer had no interest in nuances and nice distinctions ; his method was not that of argument but of assertion ; his intellectual power lay in common sense, which is the source of his dogmatic spirit ; his interest was less in ideas than in particulars ; and he taught his contemporaries to examine and consider (though with conventional and wholly inadequate standards) concrete works and passages of poetry. No predecessor in the field of criticism, French or English, had wielded analytical power such as his. Of his style, with its burly and colloquial force and its sledge-hammer humour, it will be necessary to say a few words later. It will suffice to say here that his style and his method became instruments of power in the hands of disciples and successors. It was to him that Voltaire owed not only the startling vocabulary of abuse but the critical method with which the great Frenchman attacked Shakespeare ;<sup>1</sup> and Jeremy Collier, with weapons borrowed from the same source, helped to revolutionize English taste and morals.

The history of Rymer's reputation is in itself a significant index of the changing standards of criticism. Butler's posthumous doggerel furnishes the only sign of consistent disagreement in his own age.<sup>2</sup> Gildon and Dennis differed with him in detail, and attempted to refute his Shakespearean conclusions ; the vacillating praise and blame of Dryden indicate the changes in their personal relations as much as in their critical outlook ; the fundamental fact is

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Œuvres*, ed. Moland, xxx. 363 ; i. 74.

<sup>2</sup> ii. 278-81, 341-2.

that all three respected Rymer. But the evidence is more positive and more continuous than theirs. Langbaine, who disagreed with every utterance of Rymer on Elizabethan poetry, felt obliged to acknowledge his 'excellent talent for criticism'.<sup>1</sup> The translator of Saint-Évremond, in 1685, after considering the merits of ancient and modern critics, placed Rymer with Dryden 'in the first rank of Criticks'.<sup>2</sup> Contemporaries classed him with the greatest of France: 'Rapin, Saint-Évremond, and Rymer are candid, judicious, and learned critics.'<sup>3</sup> Pope's opinion has been preserved by Spence: 'Rymer a learned and strict critic? Ay, that is exactly his character. He is generally right, though rather too severe in his opinion of the particular plays he speaks of; and is, on the whole, one of the best critics we ever had.' From this time his reputation waned with the growth of Shakespeare's fame, though even Dr. Johnson's well-known preference for Dryden when wrong to Rymer when right<sup>4</sup> may be interpreted, without too much casuistry, as implying that Rymer was just as likely to be right. An historical estimate was first attempted by Talfourd, in the first volume of the *Retrospective Review* (1820); but although on the right track, he places exaggerated emphasis on the obvious but subsidiary element of Rymer's social etiquette. Macaulay's famous characterization of him as 'the worst critic that ever lived' voices

<sup>1</sup> *Account of the English Dramatick Poets*, 1691, p. 433; cf. Gildon, *Lives and Characters of the English Dramatick Poets*, 1699, pp. 119-20.

<sup>2</sup> Ker, ii. 314.

<sup>3</sup> *The English Theophrastus*, 1702, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> *Anecdotes*, ed. 1820, p. 85. Cf. Prior, 'Satire on the Modern Translators' (dated 1684, for 1694?), in *Poems on Affairs of State*, 1697:

'Rymer, . . . we paid thee Adoration due,  
That ancient Criticks were excell'd by you;  
Each little Wit to your Tribunal came  
To hear their Doom, and to secure their Fame.'

<sup>5</sup> *Works*, London, 1824, ix. 388 sq. 'Dryden's criticism,' says Johnson, 'has the majesty of a queen, Rymer's has the ferocity of a tyrant.'



the common opinion of the century that has just passed, and has received the approval of the latest historian of criticism.<sup>1</sup>

How shall we reconcile the verdict of Langbaine and Pope with that of Macaulay and Professor Saintsbury? How came it that 'one of the best critics we ever had' has become 'the worst critic that ever lived'? It is true that we have outgrown his theory of poetry, but lesser as well as greater men in his own age accepted the same theory. Nor does the obvious answer, which the name of Shakespeare suggests, help us much more. Langbaine was an ardent admirer of the great Elizabethan dramatists, and defended them against the insinuations of Dryden; Pope was one of Shakespeare's editors, and disagreed no less than Macaulay with most of the individual comments of Rymer. This fact, though it seems to complicate the problem, really explains it. In the age of classicism, not a man's verdicts but his method and doctrine gave him his position as a critic,—not individual dicta or subjective impressions, but principles and learning, and that critical dialectic which was the art with which he wielded these weapons. To respect the critic's prowess, without regard to the object of it, was as intelligible as to admire the skill of a duellist whose thrust has destroyed a noble life. For the dogmatic element in classicism the romantic temper substituted other forms of dogmatism; and the character of the adversary became of even greater importance than the fencer's own skill. If Jeffreys or Gifford is 'too severe in his opinion of the particular plays he speaks of', his prestige as a critic suffers; his judgement of individual poems or poets is the test by which we judge his taste: if he has critical principles, they must prove themselves by right application to the facts of literary history. The

<sup>1</sup> Saintsbury, *Hist. of Crit.*, ii. 391-9.

seventeenth century would scarcely have found this point of view intelligible. Rymer's learning, his sense, his consistent doctrine, and above all his analytical power were sufficient to win for him the deference of his contemporaries. Criticism had not yet learnt to concern itself systematically with isolated lines and particular passages, and critics were not finally judged by their attitude toward them. It is one of Rymer's claims to recognition that his work tended in this very direction of the concrete.

In the conflict between classicism and rationalism, of which the seventeenth century was the great battle-ground, Rymer represents the force of reason on its static side of common sense, of 'petrified truth'. In the theory of Boileau and Pope the two conflicting forces were speciously reconciled by the assumption that, since nature and reason were best exemplified in the ancients, classical practice rather than reason or nature itself should be the guide of the poet and critic. But for Rymer (despite an equal or even greater respect for the ancients) 'common sense suffices'. The romantic temper reacted against this criterion more than any other, and the epitaph which it wrote on the grave of sense reads something like this: 'Sense, sense, nothing but sense! as if poetry in contrast with prose were not always a kind of nonsense . . . Every poetic image bears within itself its own certain demonstration that logic is not the arbitress of art.'<sup>1</sup>

### VIII. POETRY AND MORALS

The moral licence of Restoration life was mirrored in literature, and criticism was forced, willy-nilly, to face the fact and to consider the problem which it raised. The theatre, as it was most vulnerable, was the chief object of attack, and the problem finally came to a direct issue in

<sup>1</sup> Grillparzer, *Sämmtliche Werke* (Cotta ed.), xv. 64, 66.

the famous controversy on the 'immorality and profaneness' of the stage.

Suspicion of the theatre is an ancient heritage: early Church Fathers, mediaeval councils, French, Italian, and Spanish ecclesiastics, and English Puritans fulminated alike against its use and abuse long before Collier's day. It is unnecessary to recapitulate the facts of these dead controversies,<sup>1</sup> which had little significance for the England of the Restoration. They culminated, however, in two French works of Collier's own time, with both of which he was well acquainted, the Prince de Conti's *Traité de la Comédie* (1666) and Bossuet's *Maximes et Réflexions sur la Comédie* (1694). Both of these were later translated into English. Rymer refers to the first, though without much sympathy, in the dedication of the *Short View*, and Collier prefixed a brief note of commendation to the translation of the second;<sup>2</sup> but this was after he had been goaded by his enemies to shift his ground, as Dryden put it, 'from immoral plays to no plays, *ab abusu ad usum*.' In the French controversy the order was fairly reversed, but in neither case is the discussion wholly outside the limits of literary criticism: the relation of art and morals is an ever-

<sup>1</sup> For the history of the onslaughts on the theatre in general, see Desprez de Boissy, *Lettres sur les Spectacles*, ed. 1771, p. 409 sq.; Dejob, *L'Influence du Concile de Trente*, 1884, ch. iv; Belloni, *Il Seicento*, pp. 303-4, and notes; Cotarelo y Mori, *Bibliografía de las Controversias sobre la Licitud del Teatro en España*, 1904; Thompson, *The Controversy between the Puritans and the Stage*, 1903; Gazier, introduction to Bossuet's *Maximes et Réflexions sur la Comédie*, 1881. For the Collier controversy, see Macaulay's *Essay on the Restoration Dramatists*; Gosse's *Life of Congreve*, ch. iii; and Beljame's *Le Public et les Hommes de Lettres en Angleterre au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 2nd ed., p. 244 sq.

<sup>2</sup> *Maxims and Reflections upon Plays . . . Written in French by the Bishop of Meaux, and now made English*, 1699. The British Museum does not seem to possess a copy, and my own does not contain Collier's note. It appears, however, in a copy in the Columbia University Library, and consists of a single paragraph, printed opposite the title-page.

recurring problem in its history, demanding historical treatment and refusing to be dismissed by an *ex cathedra* assertion that no relation exists. Collier was acquainted with the chief documents of the discussion in France. Though they furnished him with no arguments, their authority served to strengthen his position and possibly his intention; they indicate, if nothing more, that a renewal of the old controversy was in the air, and that it could be maintained in a classical age; like them Collier supports his contention with excerpts from patristic literature. But the French and English conditions differed vitally. The position of Conti and Bossuet was based on moods and theories which were the aftermath of the Catholic Reaction; Collier faced the definite problem which Hercules had faced in the Augean stables, and the instruments he used were given to him by contemporary criticism.

It is not necessary to indicate the many notes of disapproval which Restoration comedy had called forth before Collier wrote; without considering the clergy,<sup>1</sup> the reaction can be observed in such men as Evelyn,<sup>2</sup> Flecknoe,<sup>3</sup> Shadwell,<sup>4</sup> Wright,<sup>5</sup> Vanburgh,<sup>6</sup> Dilke,<sup>7</sup> and especially Blackmore.<sup>8</sup> Nor need we consider the kindred reaction against the grossness of Restoration life; hundreds of books were devoted to the amelioration of manners, from Sir George Mackenzie's *Moral Gallantry, a Discourse, Wherein the Author endeavours to prove, That the Point of Honour, abstracting from all other ties, obliges Men to be Vertuous*,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Stage Condemn'd*, 1698, p. 76 sq.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs*, ed. Bray, 1827, iv. 135.

<sup>3</sup> Lohr, *Richard Flecknoe*, 1905, pp. 38, 98, 103.

<sup>4</sup> ii. 150-1.      <sup>5</sup> *Country Conversations*, 1694, § 1.      <sup>6</sup> *Relapse*, ii. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Preface to the *City Lady*, 1697; cf. Ravenscroft, preface to *Dame Dobson*, 1684.

<sup>8</sup> Prefaces to *Prince Arthur*, 1695, and *King Arthur*, 1697; cf. John Crowne, preface to *Caligula*, 1698.

*And that there is nothing so mean, or unworthy of a Gentleman, as Vice* (1669), to *The Reform'd Gentleman, or the old English Morals rescued from the Immoralities of the Age*; shewing how inconsistent these pretended genteel Accomplishments of swearing, drinking, whoring, and Sabbath-breaking are with the true generosity of an English Man (1693). But wholly aside from these reactions against the actual conditions of life and letters, criticism was evolving a theory of poetry in which obscenity could find no place. The achievements of Rymer's school made this inevitable; all excesses, whether in the realm of morals or in that of the imagination, were alike alien to the spirit of common sense. So Roscommon, warning the poet against both austerity and excess, condemns the latter on the ground, not of morals, but of 'want of sense';<sup>1</sup> and this was substantially the basis of Mulgrave's attack on Rochester.<sup>2</sup> Common sense was to achieve a victory which unaided ethical theory had failed to accomplish. In 1694 Sir Thomas Pope Blount devoted a chapter of his compilation, *De Re Poetica*, to the contention 'That a Poet may write upon the Subject of Love, but he must avoid Obscenity', and cited in evidence passages from Cowley, Boileau, Rapin, and the *Whole Duty of Man*, as well as those from Mulgrave and Roscommon to which I have just referred.

The most interesting of all the discussions of poetry in its relation to morals is contained, however, in Robert Wolseley's preface to Rochester's *Valentinian* (1685), reprinted in the third volume of this collection.<sup>3</sup> It was

<sup>1</sup> ii. 300.

<sup>2</sup> ii. 288.

<sup>3</sup> The preface was simply announced on the title-page as 'By one of his [i. e. Rochester's] Friends'; but its authorship was acknowledged in some verses 'To Mrs. Wharton: On a Copy of Verses she did me the honour to write in praise of the Preface to *Valentinian*: By Mr. Wolsley,' in *A New Miscellany of Original Poems on Several Occasions*, 1701, pp. 115-21. Langbaine (*Account of English Dramatick Poets*, 1691, p. 215)



provoked by Mulgrave's attack on the memory of Rochester, and fairly demolishes the argument of that weak and flaccid thinker: no other critical work of the century, except Dryden's, can compare with it in style and wit, in analytic power and dialectic skill. Rochester's *Allusion to Horace* contains acute and vigorous characterizations of his chief contemporaries; but Wolseley's preface is perhaps the sole expression of the critical principles of the group of Restoration poets to which Sedley, Buckhurst, and Rochester belonged. Its main interest for us here lies in its attempt to solve the general problem of the relation of art to morals, the first attempt approaching adequacy since the *Verato Secondo* of Guarini. Its point of departure is to be found in the hedonistic theory of life and art common to his school, and in Dryden's definitions of the drama and of 'wit'; but Wolseley deduces conclusions from these definitions which their author would scarcely have accepted. He contends that art and morals are mutually independent, and that the morality or immorality of a work of literature is no part of the problem of criticism. But his contemporaries were not prepared to follow him here. The playwrights whom Collier later lashed did not justify their frailty on grounds as fundamental as these; and the hesitating opportunism of their defence is intelligible enough; in their own minds they could not deny the appeal of the school of sense. But the victory had been achieved before Collier wrote; and in the year before the Revolution Sedley compared the change of public taste to the sudden whims of the English weather.<sup>1</sup>

The first impression on reading Collier's *Short View* is that it reproduces the tricks of Rymer's style,—the humour and bluff force, the scolding tone, the short sentences, the

refers to the preface without mentioning its author's name; Giles Jacob (*Poetical Register*, 1719, p. 272) ascribes it to Wolseley.

<sup>1</sup> Preface to *Bellamira*, 1687.

colloquial contractions of speech, the proverbial phrases, homely as Sancho Panza's, the imagery, interpreting books as well as men in terms of the shop and street. Such phrases as these have the true ring of Rymer's style: 'This would be admirable Doctrine for *Newgate*, and give us a general *Gaol-Delivery* without more ado.'<sup>1</sup> 'Such Raptures are fit only for *Bedlam*, or a place which I shan't name.'<sup>2</sup> '*Sackwine* is too low for a *Petty Constable*.'<sup>3</sup> 'No Butcher could have Thought of a more moving Expedient!'<sup>4</sup> 'Here *Pegasus* stretches it to purpose! This *Poet* is fit to ride a Match with Witches. *Juliana Cox* never Switched a Broom stock with more Expedition! This is exactly *Titus* at *Walton Town*, and *Titus* at *Islington*. One would think by the probability of matters, the *Plot* had been stolen from Dr. O—s.'<sup>5</sup> Rymer's ideas and arguments abound. The condemnation of the title of the *Relapse*, and the deduction of an ironical moral from the plot, in the fifth chapter, are taken from Rymer;<sup>6</sup> the review of classical and patristic arguments against the theatre, in the sixth chapter, follows, though with far more radical sympathy, the similar discussion in the third and fourth chapters of the *Short View of Tragedy*. From the title to the last page, the influence of style and ideas is apparent; it may seem strongest in the more purely critical portions, as in the fifth chapter, but it exists everywhere. In a word, Collier has adopted Rymer's critical method and his theory of poetry, and has transferred them both from the field of Elizabethan tragedy to that of Restoration comedy. 'Poetical justice' is the basis of his theory, and he is more consistent than Rymer himself in refusing to accept the fashionable theory that pleasure is the end of poetry. The moralistic theory, the concrete method, the

<sup>1</sup> *Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage*, 1698, p. 168.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 155.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 222.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 227.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 230.

<sup>6</sup> *ii.* 190, 221.

appeal to common sense as the fundamental authority and to classical example for mere illustrations of a perfect propriety, are common to both. The enormous reverence which they share for the social status and for its etiquette is the result of their subservience to sense.<sup>1</sup> Collier gravely considers respect to 'Quality' as one of the tests of literary excellence; and, to an American at least, the shocked comment, 'That is, he would call a Duke a Rascal!'<sup>2</sup> is deliciously ludicrous.

The controversy occasioned by Collier's book had scarcely subsided when Blackmore, who had preceded Collier in the attack on the immorality of the theatre, resumed the argument in a somewhat different way in his *Satyr against Wit* (1700). In this poem Blackmore attacked, not the drama, but the reigning taste which was responsible for its flavour, and which was summed up in what seemed to him a false conception of 'wit'. He, too, based his condemnation on the grounds of sense. His connexion with the stage controversy, and the sobriety of his innumerable epics, which were appearing with a regularity that suggests the output of a modern novelist, had already gained him the scorn of the Wits, and they now combined to squelch him with ridicule.<sup>3</sup> But the question at issue was more fundamental than the personal animus of the controversy might lead one to suppose. In the *Rehearsal*, in *Shadwell*, in *Mulgrave*, and many others, under the varying names of 'repartee', 'raillery', 'brisk writing,' and especially 'sheer wit',<sup>4</sup> the school of sense had attacked the same false conception of the poetic principle, as involved in the term 'wit', to which Blackmore and Collier were now giving the *coup de grâce*.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. ii. 195, and note.

<sup>2</sup> op. cit., p. 173.

<sup>3</sup> For a brief account of the controversy, see Aitken, *Life of Steele*, i. 60-2. The poems against Blackmore are collected in Tom Brown's *Works*, ed. 1760, i. 119-26, iv. 67-80.

<sup>4</sup> See ii. 294. 6, and note; cf. ii. 150 sq.

## IX. THE SCHOOL OF TASTE

The literary quarrel which lasted throughout the final decade of the century, and which produced in Bentley's famous *Dissertation* the first perfected English example of scientific research in literary history, has been designated as the ancient and modern controversy; but though it connects itself with the controversy of that name then raging in France, it by no means sums up all which that title implies. It is true that Temple, Wotton, Rymer, Dryden, Dennis, Gildon, Blount,<sup>1</sup> Addison,<sup>2</sup> Swift, and later Hume, discuss the abstract problem of the relationship between modern and ancient letters. But the controversy soon degenerated into personal polemics, and not one of the twenty-four pamphlets which Dyce enumerates in the Boyle-Bentley dispute is concerned with fundamental problems. Bentley himself ignores the general problem, and even dismisses with disdain the whole question of the artistic quality of the Phalaris letters under dispute.<sup>3</sup> It has already provoked the comment of literary historians that Bentley, of all men, should have been regarded, by force of circumstances, as the chief representative of the 'moderns'. But Temple, who provoked the discussion, is equally inadequate as a representative of the 'ancients'; despite his nominal leadership on this side, his tastes were markedly modern, and he represents, as we shall see, a trend of criticism in complete opposition to ancient rules.

It might be said, of course, that all criticism during the seventeenth century formed part of a general ancient and modern controversy. It was a problem inherited from the

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on Several Subjects*, 1692.

<sup>2</sup> The *Discourse on Ancient and Modern Learning*, ascribed to Addison's youth, was not published until 1739.

<sup>3</sup> *Dissertation on the Epistles of Phalaris*, ed. 1816, p. 361: 'What force of wit and spirit in the style, what lively painting of humour, some fancy they discern there, I will not examine nor dispute.'

Renaissance, first brought to a head by Giraldi Cinthio and the disputants in the Tasso and Guarini controversies,<sup>1</sup> and more elaborately discussed in the works of Tassoni, Lancilotti, and other Italians in the next century.<sup>2</sup> The tenth book of Tassoni's *Pensieri Diversi* (1612) in fact determined the form of Perrault's *Parallèle des Anciens et des Modernes* (1688-97) and Wotton's *Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning* (1694); in all three a separate chapter is devoted to each of the arts and sciences, and the achievements of 'ancients' and 'moderns' in each field are compared. Bacon and Hakewill<sup>3</sup> first presented the general problem in English; after the birth of the Royal Society and the new development of Science, the discussion was renewed by Sprat, Glanvill, and many others. The sixteenth century had stated the problem, but it lacked the confidence which the next century derived from its own achievements in letters no less than in science; the first 'moderns' claimed, not superiority, but independence of ancient authority, even the mere right to exist, for the work of their own age. The problem then had been purely literary; from the time of Tassoni, the discussion was concerned with the more general question of human progress, and embraced every form of human activity. Pascal, in the *Fragment du Traité du Vide*, published in 1663, was apparently the first to point out that a distinction must be made between science and fine art, that the modern scientist is necessarily more expert than the ancient scientist, though it by no means follows that the moderns are superior to the ancients in poetry and eloquence; and this was later accepted by Fontenelle and others. But in general no such sharp distinction was

<sup>1</sup> Cf. my *Lit. Crit. in the Ren.*, pp. 112-24, 162-7.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Belloni, *Il Seicento*, ch. xi.

<sup>3</sup> *An Apologie or Declaration of the Power and Providence of God in the Government of the World*, 1627, 3rd ed. 1635.



made, and the so-called *Virtuosi* of the Royal Society regarded belles-lettres as within their province no less than the new and fashionable experimental science, and the antiquarian and archaeological studies fostered by it.

The history of the terms *virtù* and *virtuoso* indicates the sweeping changes of Italian taste and character. From their original significance of individual will they had been transformed first into intellectual power and cunning, and then gradually into aesthetic talent and accomplishment. Scholarship, physical science, the study of antiquities, the history of letters and fine arts were all within the scope of the pervasive dilettantism of the *virtuoso*, so long as they were approached in the proper spirit, that is, with an especial interest in the details of study and research, in the actual circumstances of their growth and life, and not as abstractions or as mere illustrations of theory and law. In England the term was at first limited to the study of coins, medals, and antiquities in general; the Royal Society was responsible for its use in the more general sense,<sup>1</sup> and the *Virtuoso* of Shadwell's comedy is no other than Robert Boyle. The Baconian tradition gave impulsion to this historical and scientific development in England, and the study of things as they are in themselves was the result of this inheritance. This is the field of *virtuoso* endeavour; and in the science of 'meleteticks', invented by Boyle, the method is applied to pure letters. In his *Occasional Reflections* (1665) no specific detail of nature or human life, though trifling perhaps as Swift's imaginary 'broom-stick', is regarded as unworthy of study.<sup>2</sup>

These studies, and the method which they followed, soon entered the domain of literary criticism. Hobbes, in 1675, speaks of the 'many men called *Critiques* and *Wits* and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. ii. 280. 26. Dryden scoffs at the word in *Sir Martin Mar-all*, 1668, act iii, sc. I.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. note to ii. 156.

*Vertuosi* that are accustomed to censure the Poets',<sup>1</sup> and each of these three words may be said to represent a distinct critical school. The Critics were essentially the advocates of authority; and the later attacks on them are all directed against their adherence to the 'mechanical rules' and their subservience to foreign theory and practice.<sup>2</sup> The interest of the Wits was centred in the fanciful and inventive side of literature, in the whim of 'wit' in the various senses which have already been discussed. The *Virtuosi*, interested in the particulars of past and present experience, found in the then more or less novel concept of 'taste' a guide-post to what they sought and a touchstone of their success in finding it. The three terms indicate, in varying ways, that opposition of individualism and authority which is fought out in every age, and which in our own has been renewed under the forms of dogmatic and impressionistic criticism.

The ancients had for the most part used the term 'taste' (*gustus*) in its original physical sense, but there are perhaps one or two instances of its natural extension to the field of art. The Italians followed them in this metaphorical use of the term at least as early as Ariosto, the French somewhat later, and in England the same usage may be found in Bacon and Milton.<sup>3</sup> But the word obtained its widest currency in Spain,<sup>4</sup> and later, especially in the form of good or fine taste, was regarded everywhere as of Spanish origin. Saint-Évremond speaks of 'good taste, to use a Spanish

<sup>1</sup> ii. 68.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Steele, in the *Tatler*, no. 87; on the distinction between critics and wits, cf. Shadwell, *Works*, 1720, iv. 398.

<sup>3</sup> For the history of the term 'taste', see B. Croce, *Estetica*, Palermo, 1902, p. 194 sq.; Borinski, *Baltasar Gracian und die Hofliteratur in Deutschland*, Halle, 1894, pp. 39-54; and H. von Stein, *Die Entstehung der neueren Ästhetik*, Stuttgart, 1886, pp. 84-97.

<sup>4</sup> E.g. Lope de Vega, *Comedias* (in the *Bibl. de Autores Españoles*), i. 345, 567; ii. 22; iv. p. xxi; *Obras no dramáticas*, pp. 400, 405, 419.

term',<sup>1</sup> and Addison<sup>2</sup> ascribes the phrase, 'the fine taste,' to the Spaniard Gracián. The Chevalier de Méré, in 1669, half apologizes for using the expression 'avoir le bon goût', and defends himself on the ground that it is permissible to adopt even the newest coinage if it is a good one.<sup>3</sup> The scholar may find many earlier instances of its use; but such testimonies as Méré's and Saint-Évremond's indicate that in the late seventeenth century such terms as 'taste', 'good taste', and the like seemed wholly novel; and they acquired a keener vogue for the obvious reason that a new and richer content had been given them. Gracián has been credited with having given the term this new content; he was the first, it has been said, to conceive of taste as a special function of the mind.<sup>4</sup> Certainly before him the term had been vaguely used, and no attempt had been made to explain its meaning. The idea that taste, like wit and judgement, is a mental process which determines the attitude of the individual to life and letters, and that like them it is capable of cultivation, seemed novel and attractive, and its applicability to the problems of criticism soon became apparent. This special vogue of the concept reached England at about the same time as France, but was not immediately accepted. Dryden, in 1668, ridiculed Howard's use of the word;<sup>5</sup> and as late as 1693 Rymer preferred to borrow the term *gusto* to indicate this special sense.<sup>6</sup> But Dryden himself uses the word

<sup>1</sup> *Œuvres mêlées*, ed. Giraud, 1865, i. 93.

<sup>2</sup> *Spectator*, no. 409.

<sup>3</sup> *Œuvres*, Amsterdam, 1692, i. 242.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Borinski, loc. cit., and Farinelli's review of Borinski in the *Revista Crítica de Historia y Literatura Españolas*, 1896.

<sup>5</sup> Ker, i. 120.

<sup>6</sup> *Short View of Tragedy*, p. 52. An interesting illustration is afforded by an English translation of Gracián himself. The section on taste in his *Oráculo Manual*, ch. lxv, begins as follows:—'GUSTO RELEVANTE. Cabe cultura en él, así como en el ingenio.' Amelot de la Houssaye (*L'Homme de Cour*, Paris, 1684) translates this:—'LE GOÛT-FIN. Le goût se cultive aussi bien que l'esprit.' In the English translation (*The*

frequently, and it occurs incessantly in the critical literature of the period. What is of more importance, the new content given to the word in France powerfully affected critical thought in England, and formed the basis of the programme of a distinct school of criticism.

The formal side of French criticism in the classical period exerted a special influence on European letters, and the textbooks of Hédelin and Rapin, of Dacier and Le Bossu, in which the rules and theories of neoclassicism were collected into an organic unity and expounded with clarity and precision, attracted particular attention abroad. They recorded from a single point of view the results of a half-century of literary discussion; this explains the reason of their popularity in England, eager for the results rather than the processes of such discussion in the cultivated circles of Paris;<sup>1</sup> and it should be remembered also that no formal treatise on the art of poetry had appeared in England since the days of Puttenham. But side by side with the school which they represent there was developing another school, which I have called, perhaps rather vaguely, the School of

*Courtiers Manual Oracle or the Art of Prudence*, London, 1685), evidently based on the French, it is rendered thus:—‘THE QUAIN AND CRITICAL JUDGMENT. The judgment is cultivated as well as the wit.’ This illustration seems to indicate, first, that the word ‘taste’, or rather ‘fine taste’ or ‘good taste’, was not generally current in England in 1685; and secondly, that the phrase which Addison ascribes to Gracián, ‘the fine taste,’ came into English through the French and not directly from Gracián himself.

<sup>1</sup> A large mass of French literature more or less connected with criticism was translated into English before the end of the seventeenth century, including Le Bossu on the epic, Dacier on satire, Fontenelle on pastoral poetry, d'Aubignac on the drama, Boileau's *Art Poétique*, half a dozen treatises by Rapin, Saint-Évremond's essays, Huet on the romances, Blondel on Pindar and Horace, Bossuet on the theatre, Fleury on studies, Pellisson's History of the French Academy and his preface to the works of Sarasin, La Bruyère's *Caractères*, La Rochefoucauld's *Maximes*, Pascal's *Pensées* and *Provinciales*, Malebranche's *Recherche de la Vérite*, Moréri's dictionary, and a host of others. A bibliography of these translations is a desideratum.

Taste. Those whom it includes differ widely in their methods, their theories, and their literary preferences. Some of them, like Méré and Bouhours, represent or inherit the traditions of the *Précieuses*, more or less purified by classical culture and tempered by good sense ; others, like Saint-Évremond, renew the spirit of the earlier and freer stages of classicism ; still others, like La Bruyère, seem the natural products of the classical spirit itself. But all share this faith in common, that there is something in poetry which the so-called rules of art can neither create nor explain, and this something they seek for the most part in the concept of taste. It might be assumed from their disdain of the rules that they are the opponents of the classical writers from whose practice these rules were deduced ; but this is not the fact. Nearly all of them agree in their respect for classical poetry ; and La Bruyère, for example, is as ardent an advocate of the ancients as Temple.

The concept of taste, in the critical development of this school, underwent much the same changes as the concept of 'wit'. Beginning as a mere instinct or sentiment of the mind, without order or authority, it soon became more and more closely approximated with good sense. The Chevalier de Méré represents the earlier and more radical expression of the diversity *de gustibus*. In answer to Costar's praise of Virgil and his appeal to the authority of Scaliger, Méré writes :

'As for myself, I judge things only in accordance with my own taste, and I am therefore often in danger of rejecting what is good and of admiring what is bad, because I have not been warned about it. But despite certain great critics whom you may consult, how can you ever succeed in getting beyond your own personal opinion in judging the merit of good writers ? Who has told you that Scaliger's judgement is right ? Perhaps another critic, you will say ; and if I ask the same question concerning



the second, and the third, you can only go on from one authority to another *ad infinitum* ; you are ultimately constrained to rely on your own opinion in regard to the author or his judge. It seems to me, however, that the judgements expressed in the form of panegyric or satire are always false ; and in order to gauge the real merit of writings, it is better in reading them to examine without prepossession how they affect one's own self rather than to listen to flatterers, to the envious, or to the ignorant. Montaigne had more wit than Scaliger, and I consider him to have been more learned ; and if you have read, as I think you surely have, what he said of Ronsard and other poets of that age, that they raised French poetry to its zenith, why have you not learnt all of their poems by heart, as well as Virgil's ? Everything can impose on the unwary. When Virgil falls into my hands, I no more expect to find something rare there than if I were reading an unknown author ; so whatever passes before my eyes naturally produces its own effect on me ; and to note this seems to me to be the only method of judging sincerely . . .

Why do you suppose that sometimes in reading verses, they often bore one extremely, although everything in them appears fine and regular ? I fancy this must be caused by a certain latent clumsiness, which is only perceived by sentiment, and which those learned people who have much art and little taste do not feel. For I have noticed that those who lay the most stress on rules have little taste ; and yet it is good taste which alone can create good rules in all that concerns what is proper and fitting. Learned men, who do not enjoy the adventure of Angelica and Medoro, are charmed by that of Nisus and Euryalus ; but what a contrast between them ! The Italian's invention is pleasing and refined, that of the Latin, apart from its setting a bad example, is merely the work of a pedant. All these very learned people, perhaps even yourself, Sir, have no hesitation in ranking Virgil in every respect above Ariosto and Tasso, and even above the great Homer, one of the greatest of geniuses and the most admirable poet of the world. It is true, however, that these two Italians had many excellences which Virgil lacked, and that Homer seems to me to tower above him. Critics of the art of painting know so well how to say that one painter excelled in design and another in

invention ; this one in colouring, that one in costume ; this one in contrasts, and that one in pose. Since it is difficult and almost impossible to be first in everything, I observe that the more intelligent among them have no scruples in placing several artists who knew far less than Raphael above him in certain respects. This may be one of the chief causes of the progress that has been made by painting, and all the other arts should adopt it.<sup>1</sup>

I have indulged in a long disquisition, Sir, and yet my sole object has been to answer your beautiful and learned letter ; and it is not to decide on the merit of that excellent poet, nor to harm his reputation, that I have spoken so freely concerning him. The world will continue to think what it does of his beautiful verses ; and besides, I judge nothing, I only say what I feel, and what effect each of these things produces on my heart and on my mind. I should like every one to do likewise without carping ; for sentiment acting without reflection is usually the best judge of what is decent and agreeable ; and the best proof that the thing ought to please is that it does in fact please, especially in the case of people of good taste. . . .

You think that you have not been regular enough in most of your writings, and I, for my part, am not sure that you have not been too much so. There are certain rules which have to be observed, although they are perhaps not the best which one might have chosen first, as, for example, that the action of an heroic poem or romance should be confined to the space of a year and that of a play to a single day. These rules, of which there are but few, are so good that nowadays one cannot do without them ; long habit has so accustomed people to them that to dispense with them seems almost a violation of the proprieties. But in everything else no rule or method should be followed except in so far as good taste approves. It seems to me that even the loosest rule always acts as a constraint upon style, and robs it of some of its ease and charm.'<sup>2</sup>

For Méré, taste is a natural instinct, independent of

<sup>1</sup> This suggestion was formally adopted in the next century in Akenside's *Balance of Poets* ; cf. *infra* ; p. xcix.

<sup>2</sup> *Œuvres*, Amsterdam, 1692, ii. 72-7, 118.

science and authority. Sentiment rather than reason is its guide;<sup>1</sup> the heart rather than the mind controls its judgements. These antitheses are characteristic of the critical outlook of the next century, but it was at this period that they were first formulated. The opposition of heart and mind (*esprit*) is said to have been due to Voiture; in Bouhours's day it had gained a wide currency. 'Il faut avouer,' he says, 'que le cœur et l'esprit sont bien à la mode; on ne parle d'autre chose dans les belles conversations; on y met à toute heure l'esprit et le cœur en jeu.'<sup>2</sup> Bouhours himself places them on an equality, and reprehends the writer who asserted that 'le cœur est plus ingénieux que l'esprit';<sup>3</sup> but Méré continually urges the poetic supremacy of the heart.<sup>4</sup>

The idea of the diversity of human opinion,—an inheritance from the philosophy of Montaigne, echoed even by Malherbe,<sup>5</sup>—and the continuous protest of the French mind against excessive regularity, had received a new significance for criticism by their relation to the modern concept of taste. This first stage of the discussion, in which all authority in taste is denied, is represented in England by Hobbes,<sup>6</sup> Howard,<sup>7</sup> and others who had come under the influence of the *Précieuse* spirit in France; it was approved by the national genius, and later received important confirmation in the critical work of Saint-Évremond,<sup>8</sup> whose influence on English opinion was great (as was indeed his own debt to it), and who, perhaps more than any other single writer, determined the form and spirit of the literary essay in England.

<sup>1</sup> *op. cit.*, i. 247.

<sup>2</sup> *La Manière de bien penser dans les ouvrages d'esprit*, ed. 1695, p. 89.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*      <sup>4</sup> *op. cit.*, ii. 15, 35, 47, et *passim*

<sup>5</sup> *Œuvres*, ed. Lalanne, iv. 91.

<sup>6</sup> *English Works*, ed. Molesworth, iv. 458 sq.

<sup>7</sup> ii. 106-11.

<sup>8</sup> *Works*, London, 1714, i. 83, iii. 148.

But the rationalization of taste, tentative in Bouhours, became absolute in La Bruyère. Taste had meant a residuum in art not explicable by sense; for him it became an effect of which good sense was the cause. Taste had given scope to the widest diversity of impressions; with him it was divorced from individual whim, and found uniformity in a single and absolute standard, though it still remained independent of rules and external authority:

‘There is a point of perfection in art, as of excellence or maturity in nature. He who is sensible of it and loves it has perfect taste; he who is not sensible of it and loves this or that else on either side of it has a faulty taste. There is then a good and a bad taste, and men dispute of tastes not without reason.<sup>1</sup> . . . What a prodigious difference there is between a work that is beautiful and one that is merely regular and without faults! I am not aware that one of this latter sort has yet been written. It is easier for a great genius to attain sublimity and grandeur than to avoid every trifling fault.<sup>2</sup> . . . When the reading of a book elevates the mind, and inspires brave and noble sentiments, seek no other rule by which to judge it; it is good, and made by the hand of a true workman.’<sup>3</sup>

It will be observed that the term ‘fault’ is here used as meaning a divergence from the rules. Up to this time criticism had largely concerned itself with the analysis of ‘faults’, that is to say, with a work’s divergence from accepted norms and canons. The school of taste, opposed to the rules, centred its interest in the various elements

<sup>1</sup> With this passage cf. Dennis, *Remarks on Prince Arthur*, 1696, pp. 40-2.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Sedley’s preface to *Bellamira*, 1687: ‘I confess I have taken my Idea of Poetry more from the Latin than the French, and had rather be accus’d of some Irregularities than tire my Reader or Audience with a smooth, even stream of insipid words and accidents, such as one can neither like nor find fault with.’ But some of the French critics had learnt much the same lesson from Longinus, ch. xxxiii sq.

<sup>3</sup> *Caractères*, ‘Des Ouvrages de l’Esprit.’

of charm in a work of art, that is, in its 'beauties'. Hence arose the distinction between true and 'false beauties' which Pascal<sup>1</sup> owed to Méré;<sup>2</sup> hence developed the natural opposition between the criticism of beauties and that of faults which was to determine the trend of critical opinion for so long a time. Long before, Boccacini had doomed the critic who looked only for a poet's defects to sell the chaff of wheat throughout eternity.<sup>3</sup> But Boileau's translation of Longinus in 1674 gave a new impetus to the attack on the criticism of faults. Dryden,<sup>4</sup> in 1685, and after him Mulgrave,<sup>5</sup> Dennis,<sup>6</sup> Addison,<sup>7</sup> Johnson,<sup>8</sup> d'Alembert,<sup>9</sup> and a hundred others insisted that the true critic is concerned rather with beauties than with faults; and later still Chateaubriand and Coleridge gave renewed life to the outworn antithesis.<sup>10</sup> The practical results in criticism were often a mere mechanical computation of the two elements in any author; and the *reductio ad absurdum* of the method is perhaps to be found in Roger de Piles's *Balance des Peintres*, in which the merits of the great painters are arithmetically computed,<sup>11</sup> or in Akenside's imitation of it, *The Balance of Poets*,<sup>12</sup> in which a similar service or disservice is performed for the great poets of the world. But the vital significance of the method at this particular time is obvious; among other things, it strengthened the claims of charm and power at the expense

<sup>1</sup> *Pensées*, ed. Brunschvicg, i. 40.

<sup>2</sup> *Œuvres*, ii. 2, 139, &c.

<sup>3</sup> *Ragguagli di Parnaso*, i. 100.

<sup>4</sup> Ker, i. 264.

<sup>5</sup> Buckinghamshire, *Works*, ed. 1729, i. 180.

<sup>6</sup> Pref. to *Impartial Critick*, 1693, and to *Remarks on Prince Arthur*, 1696.

<sup>7</sup> *Spectator*, no. 291.

<sup>8</sup> *Rambler*, no. 93.

<sup>9</sup> *Éloge de Moncrif*.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Brunetière, *Évolution des Genres*, i. 184.

<sup>11</sup> *Cours de Peinture par Principes*, 1708, p. 489 sq. This work was translated into English in 1743, as *The Principles of Painting*.

<sup>12</sup> This appeared anonymously in 1746, in Dodsley's *Museum*, and was reprinted in Bucke's *Life of Akenside*, 1832, pp. 93-103.



of regularity and imitation, and developed appreciative and interpretative phases of criticism. It diverted criticism from the appraisal of a poet's work *en bloc*, and directed attention, as Méré had suggested, to the separate and constituent elements of his art. It served to discredit the one-sided method of Rymer and his disciples.

A phrase which gained wide currency at this period illustrates this relation between charm and taste. This is the *je ne sais quoi*. Montaigne, Tasso, and other writers of the sixteenth century had already found so obvious an equivalent for the Latin *nescio quid*, and as early as 1589 Mlle. de Gournay had used the phrase substantively.<sup>1</sup> But its general use in this way to indicate an inexpressible nuance was due to the *Précieuses*, perhaps as a result of peninsular influence. *Voiture*, in 1642, still uses the Spanish form ('ce que les Espagnols appellent *el no sé qué*'<sup>2</sup>); but in 1635, at one of the early meetings of the Academy, Gombauld had already read a paper 'Sur le je ne sçay quoy'.<sup>3</sup> The first substantive use of the phrase has been ascribed to the author of the *Berger Extravagant*,<sup>4</sup> but he is satirizing a fashionable expression rather than inventing one of his own. Its formal adoption by criticism was due to the school of taste, which gave renewed sanction to so many of the ideas and phrases of the *Précieuses*. Bouhours devoted to it one of the dialogues of his *Entretiens d'Ariste et d'Eugène* in 1671, and its application to art was developed by many succeeding writers from Marivaux<sup>5</sup> to Montesquieu.<sup>6</sup> In England the phrase soon became current; for Orrery<sup>7</sup> and for Con-

<sup>1</sup> Livet, *Précieux et Précieuses*, p. 271.

<sup>2</sup> *Œuvres*, ed. 1672, p. 270.

<sup>3</sup> Pellisson, *Hist. de l'Académie française*, ed. 1672, p. 101.

<sup>4</sup> Roy, *Charles Sorel*, p. 149; cf. Muralt, ed. cit., p. 206.

<sup>5</sup> *Le Cabinet du Philosophe*, 1734, no. 2 (cf. Larroumet, *Marivaux*, 2nd ed. 1894, p. 498 sq.).

<sup>6</sup> *Essai sur le Goût*.

<sup>7</sup> Prologue to *Tryphon*, 1669.

grave<sup>1</sup> it was merely 'a modish name'; and Shaftesbury<sup>2</sup> appears to be the first to give it its formal critical significance. The point of all this is that criticism, for ever seeking to rid itself of the burden of rules, had found another term to express the 'grace beyond the reach of art'; and the history of this term, like such others as 'taste', 'wit,' 'beauties,' 'delicacy,' 'humour,' and 'virtuoso', illustrates the process by which the seventeenth century gave precision to many of the words of current speech, and formulated the terminology of modern criticism.

In another respect the school of taste rendered an important service to criticism. We have already seen that the century had tended, more or less systematically, to connect poetry with the mental functions which create it. This development of criticism was naturally sympathetic to the new school, which, by insistence on taste, sentiment, the heart, and similar concepts, connected poetry more intimately with the inner processes necessary to enjoy and appreciate as well as create it. But the school went further still, and studied literature in connexion with its historical environment. Milton had already revived the classical idea that political liberty is essential to the creation of literature.<sup>3</sup> Cowley had developed the Ovidian fancy concerning the literary effects of peace and of disorder.<sup>4</sup> Long before them, Giraldi Cinthio and Guarini had accounted for the differences between ancient and modern letters on grounds of historical circumstance. But what appealed most convincingly to the school of taste was the effect of climate and race. Bouhours has usually

<sup>1</sup> *Double Dealer*, act ii, sc. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Characteristicks*, 1711, i. 137, 332, &c.

<sup>3</sup> *Prose Works*, ed. St. John, i. 241. This idea re-echoes throughout the pages of Shaftesbury (*Characteristicks*, 1711, i. 64, 72, 76, 148, &c.), and was reasserted with greater force by Hume, Gibbon, and Madame de Staël.

<sup>4</sup> ii. 80-1, and notes.

received the credit for calling attention to this fact ; it was the natural outcome of his conception of taste. But the idea that climate has an important effect on the mind and work of man is older than Aristotle's *Politics* ;<sup>1</sup> thence Bodin<sup>2</sup> borrowed it at the end of the sixteenth century ; and Bacon (who also anticipated Bouhours's very tentative theory of the *Zeitgeist*) and later Sprat made it more or less familiar to Englishmen.<sup>3</sup> But its chief exponents at the end of the seventeenth century were Fontenelle and Saint-Évremond, and to the latter Dryden<sup>4</sup> and Dennis owed their interest in it.

Dennis's preface to the *Impartial Critick* is perhaps the best of the expositions of the effects of climate on the literary temper of a race ; a hint from Saint-Évremond<sup>5</sup> has furnished him with a suggestive explanation for the differences between Greek and English tragedy. His early work is made up of such refinements on the scattered *dicta* of French and English critics ; he did not find himself, as it were, until the first decade of the next century ; and the series of important works which he published then easily constitutes him the representative critic of that brief period. The work of this significant decade does not fall within our province ; but even before this he was anticipating new tendencies of criticism. His *Remarks on Prince*

<sup>1</sup> *Politics*, iv. 7 (ed. Newman, 1902, vol. iii. p. 46 ; and for the history of the idea in classical antiquity, p. 363 sq.). The theory first appears in Hippocrates, *Airs, Waters, and Places*, §§ 12-24 ; cf. Cardano, *Commentarii in Hippocratis de Aere, Aquis, et Locis Opus*, Basle, 1570, pp. 140-245.

<sup>2</sup> *République*, 1577, v. 1 ; *Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem*, 1560, ch. vi ; cf. Charron, *De la Sagesse*, i. 42.

<sup>3</sup> ii. 112-19.

<sup>4</sup> *Heads of an Answer to Rymer*, and elsewhere.

<sup>5</sup> *Works*, i. 71. Du Bos, in his *Réflexions critiques sur la Poésie et sur la Peinture*, pt. ii. §§ 13-20, was the chief eighteenth-century exponent of the theory of climate before the days of Montesquieu ; cf. Braunschvig, *L'Abbé Du Bos, Renovateur de la Critique au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 1904.

*Arthur*, which has been called 'the first review of a book in the modern sense', and is doubtless the earliest example of the complete application of Le Bossu's Aristotelianism to the study of an English epic, forestalls by many years Addison's similar treatment of *Paradise Lost*.

In England, as in France, the school of taste represents a group of ideas and sympathies rather than an organized group of men. The Baconian tradition had dowered England with a heritage of science and research which was scarcely equalled elsewhere. Certainly nowhere else does the study of fine art and antiquities go hand in hand in quite the same way with purely critical studies. Archaeology and connoisseurship, scientific experiment and historical research became the handmaids of criticism. Rymer's Provençal and Temple's Norse studies, Evelyn's antiquarianism, Robert Wolseley's amateurship were alike made to serve a critical purpose. Not all who dabbled with these studies were adherents of the school of taste, but the school was willing to assimilate the contributions of all.

Sir William Temple is perhaps the chief exponent during this period of the virtuoso spirit in English criticism. For him, 'learning' (which includes natural science, scholarship, and general belles-lettres) is the antithesis of poetry, corresponding to the antithesis of profit and pleasure. Though poetry needs the assistance of art, it is not to be created by means of art or study, precepts or examples. The arbitrary rules which have come from France are shackles not to be borne. The true touchstone of poetry is its effect on the reader's heart and mind; and to produce this dual effect the poet needs judgement no less than 'wit' or fancy. This being his critical doctrine, it is natural that he should ignore 'critick and rules'; the method which he prefers is largely, though not wholly, concerned with literature in its historical aspect. The

results of this critical method cannot be dismissed with the complacent dogmatism of Macaulay. The latter's well-known censure of the *Essay on Ancient and Modern Learning* for omitting Shakespeare, Calderon, Molière, and others in a list of representative writers is wholly undeserved; Temple says that, as poetry demands separate treatment, he will confine himself in this essay to the 'great wits' and discuss no poets; the mere distinction itself should count in his favour. Boccaccio and Machiavelli, Rabelais and Montaigne, Sidney, Bacon, and Selden are his favourite prosemen; the later Frenchmen, such as Voiture, Bussy-Rabutin, and La Rochefoucauld, he finds too 'filed and polished'. To me this seems no mean selection. It was no narrow or trivial spirit that could sympathize with Scandinavian and Oriental poetry and legend no less than with the more fashionable classics; but the significance of these studies is too well known to need discussion here. His comments on the English theatre, on the origin of 'wit', on English humour, are keen and intelligent; and he exhibits some historical insight at least, in ascribing the decadence of poetry in his own day to the influence of 'conceits', the prevalence of ridicule, and the excessive attention to refinement of language and style. Though he owed much to France, his sympathies remained English; he inaugurated, or at least gave strength to, the tradition of its superior genius,<sup>1</sup> and his appreciation of humour as an exhibition of individual life distinguishes him from the essentially French point of view, as in La Bruyère, for whom comedy, like all other forms, presented a portrait not of men but of man. Temple was essentially a dilettante, but the careful and cadenced style which drew forth the admiration of Johnson is not his only claim to consideration in the history of English letters.

The dissatisfaction with regularity, for which the school

<sup>1</sup> Cf. ii. 298. 22 sq.



of taste was responsible, induced Dacier, in 1692, to prefix his famous defence of the rules to his translation of Aristotle's *Poetics*. His arguments, reinforcing those of Boileau and Rapin, became the commonplaces of English criticism. The skill of Pope gave to some of them a renewed authority, but in the *Essay on Criticism*, as in the *Spectator*, many of the ideas of the opposing school are harmonized with reason and art. The pure tradition of taste was represented by Shaftesbury, who carried on the speculations of Méré, Bouhours, and their contemporaries.<sup>1</sup> Only in such textbooks as the *Complete Art of Poetry* and the *Laws of Poetry*, in which

‘Gildon sells  
Poetic buckets for dry wells,’<sup>2</sup>

did the more mechanical rules obtain a longer lease of impoverished life.

The school of taste represents, then, a transition from the spirit of the seventeenth century. Criticism advanced from the static idea of literature to the idea of change and progress in culture, from the study of a work of art in itself and *in vacuo* to the study of its relation to the mind of man and to its external environment, from a general and abstract treatment to the consideration of particular passages and details, from the criticism of ‘faults’ to that of ‘beauties’, from the concept of reason to that of sentiment and taste; and all these changes were, though tentatively and hesitatingly, indicated and sometimes defended by various members of the school of taste.

Literary history has inherited a traditional division of the seventeenth century into two arbitrary periods, each with a more or less definite and uniform outlook on litera-

<sup>1</sup> Armstrong's poem, *Taste*, and Foote's farce bearing the same title, are to be regarded as signs of reaction against Shaftesbury's school about the middle of the eighteenth century.

<sup>2</sup> Green's *Spleen*, publ. 1737.

ture ; modern research and speculation have destroyed this very homogeneous impression. Seventeenth-century criticism is really a very troubled stream ; winds from every quarter blow across its surface ; currents from many springs and tributaries struggle for mastery within it. Nearly all the moods of criticism, classical and romantic, analytical and synthetic, impressionistic and dogmatic, historical and interpretative, are fitfully represented there. In its progress it assumes all the forms of prose and verse, preface and prologue, dialogue and epistle, burlesque and allegory, biography and literary research, essay and formal treatise ; but an increasing attention was centred on the last two, and the essay gradually came into its own as the characteristic vehicle of critical expression. Everywhere in Europe, though as yet with less vigour in England than elsewhere, periodical criticism had begun. The Channel has never been an insurmountable barrier to the movement of ideas ; and no right estimate of the development of criticism is possible without constantly crossing and recrossing national frontiers. In this age England was (to borrow the jargon of finance) a debtor nation ; and though it was not until the next age that she began slowly to repay her continental debts, she was already applying this capital of ideas to her own domestic economy. In the work of Dryden, which has been but lightly touched upon in these pages, all these currents of thought are utilized, all these forms and moods of criticism are more or less mirrored : in this field he is, after all, the chief representative of his century, and, in more senses than one, the first great modern critic.

CRITICAL ESSAYS  
OF  
THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY  
1605—1650



# FRANCIS BACON

FROM THE TVVOO BOOKES OF THE PROFICIENCE  
AND ADVANCEMENT OF LEARNING, DIVINE  
AND HVMANE

1605

## I. FROM THE FIRST BOOKE

THERE be therfore chiefly three vanities in Studies, whereby learning hath been most traduced: For those things we do esteeme vaine which are either false or friuolous, those which either haue no truth or no vse ;  
5 & those persons we esteem vain which are either credulous or curious ; & curiositie is either in mater or words : so that in reason as wel as in experience there fal out to be these 3 distempers (as I may tearm them) of learning: The first, fantastical learning ; The second, contentious  
10 learning ; & the last, delicate learning ; vaine Imaginations, vaine Altercations, & vain affectations ; & with the last I wil begin. *Martin Luther*, conducted no doubt by an higher prouidence, but in discourse of reason, finding what a Prouince he had vndertaken against the Bishop of *Rome*  
15 and the degenerate traditions of the Church, and finding his owne solitude being no waies ayded by the opinions of his owne time, was enforced to awake all Antiquitie, and to call former times to his succors to make a partie against the present time : so that the ancient Authors,  
20 both in Diuinitie and in Humanitie, which had long time slept in Libraries, began generally to be read and reuolued. This by consequence did draw on a necessitie of a more exquisite trauaile in the languages originall wherin those Authors did write: For the better vnderstanding of those  
25 Authors, and the better aduantage of pressing and applying



their words. And thereof grew againe a delight in their  
 manner of Stile and Phrase, and an admiration of that  
 kinde of writing ; which was much furthered & precipitated  
 by the enmity & opposition that the propounders of those  
 primitiue but seeming new opinions had against the 5  
 Schoole-men, who were generally of the contrarie part,  
 and whose Writings were altogether in a differing Stile  
 and fourme, taking libertie to coyne and frame new tearms  
 of Art to expresse their own sence, and to auoide circuite  
 of speech without regard to the purenesse, pleasantnesse, 10  
 and (as I may call it) lawfulnessse of the Phrase or word :  
 And againe, because the great labour that then was with  
 the people (of whome the Pharisees were wont to say,  
*Execrabilis ista turba quæ non nouit legem*), for the winning  
 and perswading of them there grewe of necessitie in cheefe 15  
 price and request eloquence and varietie of discourse, as  
 the fittest and forciblest accesse into the capacitie of the  
 vulgar sort ; so that these foure causes concurring, the  
 admiration of ancient Authors, the hate of the Schoole-  
 men, the exact studie of Languages, and the efficacie of 20  
 Preaching did bring in an affectionate studie of eloquence  
 and copie of speech, which then began to flourish. This  
 grew speedily to an excesse ; for men began to hunt more  
 after wordes than matter, and more after the choisenesse  
 of the Phrase, and the round and cleane composition of 25  
 the sentence, and the sweet falling of the clauses, and the  
 varying and illustration of their workes with tropes and  
 figures, then after the weight of matter, worth of subiect,  
 soundnesse of argument, life of inuention, or depth of  
 iudgement. Then grew the flowing and watrie vaine of 30  
*Osorius*, the Portugall Bishop, to be in price ; then did  
*Sturmius* spend such infinite and curious paines vpon  
*Cicero* the Orator and *Hermogenes* the Rhetorican, besides  
 his owne Bookes of Periods and imitation and the like ;  
 Then did *Car* of Cambridge, and *Ascham*, with their 35

Lectures and Writings, almost deifie *Cicero* and *Demo-*  
*sthenes*, and allure all young men that were studious vnto  
 that delicate and pollished kinde of learning. Then did  
*Erasmus* take occasion to make the scoffing Eccho, *Decem*  
*5 annos consumpsi in legendo Cicerone*, and the Eccho  
 answered in Greeke, *One (Asine)*. Then grew the learning  
 of the Schoole-men to be vtterly despised as barbarous.  
 In summe, the whole inclination and bent of those times  
 was rather towards copie than weight.

10 Here, therefore, <is> the first distemper of learning,  
 when men studie words and not matter; whereof though  
 I haue represented an example of late times, yet it hath  
 beene and will be, *Secundum maius & minus*, in all time.  
 And how is it possible but this should haue an operation  
 15 to discredite learning, euen with vulgar capacities, when  
 they see learned mens workes like the first Letter of  
 a Patent or limmed Booke, which, though it hath large  
 flourishes, yet it is but a Letter. It seemes to me that  
*Pigmaliions* frenzie is a good embleme or portraiture of this  
 20 vanitie; for wordes are but the Images of matter, and  
 except they haue life of reason and inuention, to fall in  
 loue with them is all one as to fall in loue with a Picture.

But yet notwithstanding it is a thing not hastily to be  
 condemned, to cloath and adorne the obscuritie euen of  
 25 Philosophie it selfe with sensible and plausible elocution.  
 For hereof we haue great examples in *Xenophon*, *Cicero*,  
*Seneca*, *Plutarch*, and of *Plato* also in some degree, and  
 hereof likewise there is great vse: For surely, to the  
 seuere inquisition of truth and the deepe progresse into  
 30 Philosophie, it is some hindrance; because it is too early  
 satisfactorie to the minde of man, and quencheth the desire  
 of further search before we come to a iust periede. But  
 then if a man be to haue any vse of such knowledge in  
 ciuile occasions, of conference, counsell, perswasion, dis-  
 35 course, or the like; Then shall he finde it prepared to his

hands in those Authors which write in that manner. But the excesse of this is so iustly contemptible, that as *Hercules*, when hee saw the Image of *Adonis*, *Venus Mignon*, in a Temple, sayd in disdaine, *Nil sacri es*; So there is none of *Hercules* followers in Learning, that is, the more 5 seuere and laborious sort of Enquirers into truth, but will despise those delicacies and affectations, as indeede capable of no diuinesse. And thus much of the first disease or distemper of learning. . . .

## II. FROM THE SECOND BOOKE

THE PARTS of humane learning haue reference to the 10 three partes of Mans vnderstanding, which is the seate of Learning: HISTORY to his MEMORY, POESIE to his IMAGINATION, and PHILOSOPHIE to his REASON. Diuine learning receiue the same distribution, for the Spirit of Man is the same, though the Reuelation of Oracle and 15 Sense be diuerse: So as Theologie consisteth also of HISTORIE of the Church, of PARABLES, which is Diuine *Poesie*, and of holie DOCTRINE or *Precept*. For as for that part which seemeth supernumerarie, which is *Prophecie*, it is but Diuine Historie, which hath that prerogatiue ouer 20 humane as the Narration may bee before the fact aswell as after.

HISTORY is NATVRALL, CIVILE, ECCLESIASTICALL, & LITERARY, wherof the three first I allow as extant, the fourth I note as deficient. For no man hath propounded 25 to himselfe the generall state of learning to bee described and represented from age to age, as many haue done the works of Nature & the State ciuile and Ecclesiastical, without which the History of the world seemeth to me to be as the *Statua* of *Polyphemus* with his eye out, that part 30 being wanting which doth most shew the spirit and life of the person. And yet I am not ignorant that in diuers

particular sciences, as of the Iurisconsults, the Mathematicians, the Rhetoricians, the Philosophers, there are set down some smal memorials of the Schooles, Authors, and Bookes; and so likewise some barren relations touching  
 5 the Inuention of Arts or vsages. But a iust story of learning, containing the Antiquities & Originalls of Knowledges & their Sects, their Inuentions, their Traditions, their diuerse Administrations and Managings, their Flourishings, their Oppositions, Decayes, Depressions, Obliuions,  
 10 Remoues, with the causes and occasions of them, and all other euent concerning learning throughout the ages of the world, I may truly affirme to be wanting. The vse and end of which worke I doe not so much designe for curiositie or satisfaction of those that are the louers of learning, but  
 15 chiefly for a more serious & graue purpose, which is this in fewe wordes, that it will make learned men wise in the vse and administration of learning. For it is not Saint *Augustines* nor Saint *Ambrose* workes that will make so wise a Diuine as Ecclesiasticall Historie throughly read  
 20 and obserued, and the same reason is of Learning.

P OESIE is a part of Learning in measure of words for the most part restrained, but in all other points extreamely licensed, and doth truly referre to the Imagination, which, beeing not tyed to the Lawes of Matter,  
 25 may at pleasure ioyne that which Nature hath seuered, & seuer that which Nature hath ioyned, and so make vnlawfull Matches & diuorses of things: *Pictoribus atque Poetis &c.* It is taken in two senses in respect of Wordes or Matter. In the first sense it is but a *Character* of stile,  
 30 and belongeth to Arts of speeche, and is not pertinent for the present. In the later, it is, as hath beene saide, one of the principall Portions of learning, and is nothing else but FAINED HISTORY, which may be stiled as well in Prose as in Verse.

The vse of this FAINED HISTORIE hath beene to giue some shadowe of satisfaction to the minde of Man in those points wherein the Nature of things doth denie it, the world being in proportion inferiour to the soule; by reason whereof there is agreeable to the spirit of Man 5 a more ample Greatnesse, a more exact Goodnesse, and a more absolute varietie then can bee found in the Nature of things. Therefore, because the Acts or Euent of *true Historie* haue not that Magnitude which satisfieth the minde of Man, *Poesie* faineth Acts and Euent Greater 10 and more Heroicall; because *true Historie* propoundeth the successes and issues of actions not so agreeable to the merits of Vertue and Vice, therefore *Poesie* faines them more iust in Retribution and more according to Reuealed Prouidence; because *true Historie* representeth Actions 15 and Euent more ordinarie and lesse interchanged, therefore *Poesie* endueth them with more Rarenesse and more vnexpected and alternatiue Variations: So as it appeareth that *Poesie* serueth and conferreth to Magnanimitie, Moraltie, and to delectation. And therefore it was 20 euer thought to haue some participation of diuinesse, because it doth raise and erect the Minde, by submitting the shewes of things to the desires of the Mind, whereas reason doth buckle and bowe the Mind vnto the Nature of things. And we see that by these insinuations and 25 congruities with mans Nature and pleasure, ioyned also with the agreement and consort it hath with Musicke, it hath had accesse and estimation in rude times and barbarous Regions, where other learning stooode excluded.

The diuision of Poesie which is aptest in the proprietie 30 therof (besides those diuisions which are common vnto it with history, as fained Chronicles, fained liues, & the Appendices of History, as fained Epistles, fained Orations, and the rest) is into POESIE NARRATIVE, REPRESENTATIVE, and ALLVSIVE. The NARRATIVE is 35



a meere imitation of History with the excesses before remembred, Choosing for subiect commonly Warrs and Loue, rarely State, and sometimes Pleasure or Mirth. REPRESENTATIVE is as a visible History, and is an  
 5 Image of Actions as if they were present, as History is of actions in nature as they are, that is past ; ALLVSIVE, or PARABOLICALL, is a NARRATION applied onely to expresse some speciall purpose or conceit: Which later kind of Parabolical wisdom was much more in vse in the ancient  
 10 times, as by the Fables of *Aesope*, and the briefe sentences of the seuen, and the use of *Hieroglyphikes* may appeare. And the cause was for that it was then of necessitie to expresse any point of reason which was more sharpe or subtile then the vulgar in that maner, because men in those  
 15 times wanted both varietie of examples and subtiltie of conceit: And as *Hieroglyphikes* were before Letters, so parables were before arguments: And neuerthelesse now and at all times they doe retaine much life and vigor, because reason cannot bee so sensible, nor examples so fit.  
 20 But there remaineth yet another vse of POESY PARABOLICAL opposite to that which we last mentioned ; for that tendeth to demonstrate and illustrate that which is taught or deliuered, and this other to retire and obscure it: That is, when the Secrets and Misteries of Religion,  
 25 Pollicy, or Philosophy, are inuolued in Fables or Parables. Of this in diuine Poesie wee see the vse is authorised. In Heathen Poesie wee see the exposition of Fables doth fall out sometimes with great felicitie, as in the Fable that the Gyants beeing ouerthrowne in their warre against the Gods,  
 30 the Earth their mother in reuenge thereof brought forth Fame :

*Illam terra Parens ira irritata Deorum,  
 Extremam, vt perhibent, Cæo Enceladoque Sororem  
 Progeniuit:*

35 expounded that when Princes & Monarches haue sup-

pressed actual and open Rebels, then the malignitie of people, which is the mother of Rebellion, doth bring forth Libels & slanders, and taxations of the states, which is of the same kind with Rebellion, but more Feminine: So in the Fable that the rest of the Gods hauing conspired to 5 binde *Iupiter*, *Pallas* called *Briareus* with his hundreth hands to his aide, expounded, that Monarchies neede not feare any courbing of their absolutenesse by Mightie Subiects, as long as by wisdom they keepe the hearts of the people, who will be sure to come in on their side: 10 So in the fable that *Achilles* was brought vp vnder *Chyron* the *Centaure*, who was part a man & part a beast, expounded Ingenuously, but corruptly by Machiauell, that it belongeth to the education and discipline of Princes to knowe as well how to play the part of the Lyon in violence 15 and the Foxe in guile, as of the Man in vertue and Iustice. Neuerthelesse in many the like incounters, I doe rather think that the fable was first and the exposition deuised then that the Morall was first & thereupon the fable framed. For I finde it was an auncient vanitie in *Chrisippus* 20 that troubled himselfe with great contention to fasten the assertions of the *Stoicks* vpon the fictions of the ancient Poets: But yet that all the Fables and fictions of the Poets were but pleasure and not figure, I interpose no opinion. Surely of those Poets which are now extant, 25 euen *Homer* himselfe (notwithstanding he was made a kinde of Scripture by the later Schooles of the Grecians) yet I should without any difficultie pronounce, that his Fables had no such inwardnesse in his owne meaning: But what they might haue, vpon a more originall tradition, 30 is not easie to affirme, for he was not the inuenter of many of them. In this third part of Learning which is Poesie, I can report no deficiencie. For being as a plant that commeth of the lust of the earth, without a formall seede, it hath sprung vp and spread abroad, more then any other 35

kinde: But to ascribe vnto it that which is due for the  
expressing of affections, passions, corruptions and customes,  
we are beholding to Poets more then to the Philosophers  
workes, and for wit and eloquence not much lesse then to  
5 Orators harangues. But it is not good to stay too long in  
the Theater: let vs now passe on to the iudicial Place or  
Pallace of the Mind, which we are to approach and view,  
with more reuerence and attention, . . .

# BEN JONSON

## I. FROM THE PREFACE TO *SEIANVS, HIS FALL*

1605

TO THE READERS

THE following and voluntary Labours of my Friends, prefix to my Booke, haue releiued me in much whereat, without them, I should necessarilie haue touchd. Now I will onely vse three or foure short and needfull Notes, and so rest.

First, if it be objected that what I publish is no true *Poëme* in the strict Lawes of *Time*, I confesse it, as also in the want of a proper *Chorus*, whose Habite and Moodes are such and so difficult as not any whome I haue seene since the *Auntients* (no, not they who haue most presently affected Lawes) haue yet come in the way off. Nor is it needful, or almost possible, in these our Times, and to such Auditors as commonly Things are presented, to obserue the ould state and splendour of *Drammatick Poëmes*, with preseruation of any popular delight. But of this I shall take more seasonable cause to speake in my Obseruations vpon *Horace* his *Art of Poetry*, which, with the Text translated, I intend shortly to publish. In the meane time, if in truth of Argument, dignity of Persons, grauity and height of Elocution, fulnesse and frequence of Sentence, I haue discharg'd the other offices of a *Tragick* writer, let not the absence of these *Formes* be imputed to me, wherein I shall giue you occasion hereafter, and without my boast, to thinke I could better prescribe then omit the due vse for want of a conuenient knowledge.

The next is, least in some nice nostrill the *Quotations* might sauour affected, I doe let you know that I abhor

nothing more, and haue onely done it to shew my integrity  
in the *Story*, and saue my selfe in those common Torturers  
that bring all wit to the Rack, whose Noses are euer like  
Swine spoyling and rooting vp the *Muses* Gardens, and  
5 their whole Bodies like Moles, as blindly working vnder  
Earth to cast any, the least, hilles vpon *Vertue*. . . .

II. DEDICATORY EPISTLE OF *VOLPONE*  
OR *THE FOXE*

1607

TO THE MOST NOBLE  
AND MOST ÆQVALL  
SISTERS

10 THE TWO FAMOVS VNIVERSITIES  
FOR THEIR LOVE  
AND

ACCEPTANCE  
SHEW'N TO HIS POEME  
15 IN THE PRESENTATION :

BEN IONSON  
THE GRATEFVLL ACKNOWLEDGER  
DEDICATES

BOTH IT AND HIMSELFE.

20 There followes an *Epistle*, if  
you dare venture on  
the length.

THE EPISTLE

NEVER, *most æquall* SISTERS, had any man a wit so  
presently excellent, as that it could raise it selfe,  
25 but there must come both Matter, Occasion, Com-  
menders, and Fauourers to it. If this be true, and that  
the Fortune of all *Writers* doth daily proue it, it behoues  
the carefull to prouide well toward these accidents; and  
hauing acquir'd them, to preserue that part of reputation  
30 most tenderly, wherein the benefit of a Friend is also



defended. Hence is it, that I now render my selfe gratefull, and am studious to iustifie the bounty of your act : To which, though your mere authority were satisfying, yet it being an age wherein *Poëtry* and the Professors of it heare so ill on all sides, there will a reason bee look'd for 5 in the subiect. It is certaine, nor can it with any forehead be oppos'd, that the too-much licence of *Poëtasters* in this time hath much deform'd their *Mistresse* ; that euey day their manifold and manifest ignorance doth stick vnnaturall reproches vpon her. But for their petulancy, it were an 10 act of the greatest iniustice, either to let the learned suffer, or so diuine a *skill* (which indeed should not be attempted with vncleane hands) to fall vnder the least contempt. For if men will impartially, and not à-squint, looke toward the offices and function of a *Poët*, they will easily conclude to 15 themselues the impossibility of any mans being the good *Poët*, without first being a good *Man*. He that is sayd to be able to informe *yong-men* to all good disciplines, inflame *growne-men* to all great vertues, keepe *old men* in their best and supreme state, or as they decline to child-hood, recouer 20 them to their first strength ; that comes forth the Interpreter and Arbiter of *Nature*, a Teacher of things diuine no lesse then humane, a Master in manners ; and can alone, or with a few, effect the busines of Man-kind. This, I take him, is no subiect for *Pride* and *Ignorance* to exercise their railing 25 *rhetorique* vpon. But it will here be hastily answer'd, that the *Writers* of these dayes are other things ; that not onely their manners, but their natures, are inuerted, and nothing remaining with them of the dignity of *Poët*, but the abused name, which euey Scribe vsurpes ; that now 30 especially in *Dramatick*, or (as they terme it) *Stage-Poëtry*, nothing but Ribaldry, Profanation, Blasphemy, al Licence of offence to God, and Man, is practisd. I dare not deny a great part of this, and am sory I dare not ; because in some mens abortiue *Features* (and would they had neuer 35

boasted the light) it is ouer-true. But that all are  
 embarqu'd in this bold aduenture for Hell, is a most  
 vncharitable thought, and vtterd, a more malicious slander.  
 For my particular, I can, and from a most cleare conscience,  
 5 affirme, that I haue euer trembled to thinke toward the  
 least Prophanenesse; haue loathed the vse of such foule and  
 vn-washd Baudr'y, as is now made the foode of the *Scene*.  
 And howsoever I cannot escape, from some, the imputation  
 of sharpnesse, but that they wil say I haue taken a pride  
 10 or lust to be bitter, and not my yongest Infant but hath  
 come into the world with all his teeth; I would aske of  
 these supercilious *Politiques*, what Nation, Society, or  
 generall Order, or State, I haue prouokd? what publike  
 Person? whether I haue not, in all these, preseru'd their  
 15 dignity, as mine owne person, safe? My WORKES are read,  
 allow'd, (I speake of those that are intirely mine), looke  
 into them: what broad reproofes haue I vsd? Where  
 haue I bin particular? Where personall, except to a  
 Mimick, Cheater, Baud, or Buffon, creatures, for their  
 20 insolencies, worthy to be tax'd? or to which of these so  
 pointingly, as he might not either ingeniously haue confest,  
 or wisely dissembled his disease? But it is not Rumour  
 can make men guilty, much lesse entitle me to other mens  
 crimes. I know that nothing can be so innocently writ or  
 25 carried, but may be made obnoxious to construction; mary,  
 whilst I beare mine innocence about me, I feare it not.  
 Application is now growne a Trade with many; and there  
 are that professe to haue a *Key* for the deciphering of euery  
 thing; but let wise and noble Persons take heed how they  
 30 bee too credulous, or giue leaue to these inuading Inter-  
 preters, to be ouer-familiar with their fames, who cunningly,  
 & often, vtter their owne virulent malice vnder other mens  
 simplest meanings. As for those that wil, by faults which  
 charity hath rak'd vp, or common honesty conceald, make  
 35 themselues a name with the Multitude, or, to drawe their

rude and beastly clappes, care not whose liuing faces they intrench with their petulant stiles ; may they doe it without a riual, for mee ! I chuse rather to liue grau'd in obscuritie then share with them in so preposterous a fame. Nor can I blame the wishes of those graue and wiser *Patriotes*, who 5 prouiding the hurts these licentious spirits may do in a State, desire rather to see Fooles, and Diuells, and those antique reliques of Barbarisme retriu'd, with all other ridiculous, and exploded follies, then behold the wounds of Priuate men, of Princes, and Nations. For, as HORACE 10 makes *Trebatius* speake, in these,

*Sibi quisque timet, quanquam est intactus, & odit.*

And men may iustly impute such rages, if continu'd, to the *Writer*, as his sports. The encrease of which lust in liberty, together with the present trade of the Stage, in all 15 their misc'line *Enterludes*, what learned or liberall soule doth not already abhor ? where nothing but the garbage of the time is vtter'd, & that with such impropriety of *phrase*, such plenty of *solæcismes*, such dearth of *sense*, so bold *prolepse's*, so rackt *metaphor's*, with brothelry able to violate 20 the eare of a *Pagan*, and blasphemy to turne the bloud of a *Christian* to water. I cannot but be serious in a cause of this nature, wherein my fame, & the reputations of diuerse honest & learned are the question ; when a NAME, so full of authority, antiquity, and all great marke, is, 25 through their insolence, become the lowest scorne of the *Age* ; and those MEN subiect to the petulancie of euery vernaculous *Orator*, that were wont to be the care of *Kings*, and happiest *Monarchs*. This it is that hath not onely rap't mee to present indignation, but made mee studious, 30 heretofore, and by all my actions, to stand of from them ; which may most appeare in this my latest WORKE, which you, *most learned ARBITRESSES*, haue seene, iudg'd, & to my crowne, approu'd, wherein I haue labourd, for their

instruction and amendment, to reduce, not onely the  
antient formes, but manners of the *Scene*, the easinesse,  
the propriety, the innocence, and last the doctrine, which  
is the principall end of POESY, to informe men in the best  
5 reason of liuing. And though my *Catastrophe* may, in the  
strict rigour of *Comick* Law, meete with censure, as turning  
back to my promise; I desire the learned and charitable  
*Critick* to haue so much faith in me, to thinke it was done  
off industrie. For with what ease I could haue varied it  
10 nearer his *scale* (but that I feare to boast my owne faculty)  
I could here insert. But my special aime being to put the  
snafle in their mouths that crie out, we neuer punish vice  
in our *Enterludes*, &c., I tooke the more liberty; though  
not without some lines of example drawne euen in the  
15 *Antients* themselues, the goings out of whose *Comædies*  
are not alwayes ioyfull, but oftimes the Baudes, the Seruants,  
the Riuals, yea, and the maisters are mulcted; and fitly,  
it beeing the office of a *Comick*-POET to imitate iustice and  
instruct to life, as well as puritie of language, or stirre vp  
20 gentle affections. To which, vpon my next opportunity  
toward the examining & digesting of my *notes*, I shall  
speake more wealthily, and pay the World a debt.

In themeane time, *most reuerenced* SISTERS, as I haue car'd  
to be thankfull for your affections past, and here made the  
25 vnderstanding acquainted with some ground of your fauors;  
let me not dispayre their continuance, to the maturing of  
some worthier fruits, wherein, if my *MVSES* bee true to  
me, I shall raise the dispis'd head of POETRY againe, &  
stripping her out of those rotten and base ragges, wherewith  
30 the *Times* haue adulterated her forme, restore her to her  
primitiue habite, feature, and maiesty, and render her  
worthy to be imbraced and kist of all the great and Maister  
*Spirits* of our World. As for the vile and slothfull, who  
neuer affected an act worthy of celebration, or are so  
35 inward with their owne vicious natures as they worthely

feare her, and thinke it a high point of policie to keepe her in contempt with their declamatory and windy inuectiues; shee shall out of iust rage incite her Seruants (who are *Genus iritabile*) to spout inke in their faces, that shall eate farder then their marrow, into their fames; and not <sup>5</sup> CINNAMVS the Barber, with his art, shall be able to take out the brands; but they shall liue, and be read, till the Wretches die, as Things worst deseruing of themselues in chiefe, and then of all mankind.

*From my house in the Black-Friars  
this 11. of February, 1607.*

### III. PREFACE TO *THE ALCHEMIST*

1612

#### TO THE READER

**I**F thou beest more, thou art an Vnderstander, and then <sup>10</sup> I trust thee. If thou art one that tak'st vp, and but a Pretender, beware at what hands thou receiu'st thy commoditie; for thou wert neuer more fair in the way to be cos'ned then in this Age in *Poetry*, especially in Playes: wherein, now, the Concupiscence of Iigges and Daunces <sup>15</sup> so raigneth, as to runne away from Nature, and be afraid of her, is the onely point of art that tickles the *Spectators*. But how out of purpose and place doe I name Art? when the Professors are growne so obstinate contemners of it, and presumers on their owne Naturalls, as they are <sup>20</sup> deriders of all diligence that way, and by simple mocking at the termes, when they vnderstand not the things, thinke to get of wittily with their Ignorance. Nay, they are esteem'd the more learned and sufficient for this by the Multitude through their excellent vice of iudgement. For <sup>25</sup> they commend Writers as they doe Fencers or Wrastlers, who, if they come in robustuously and put for it with



a great deale of violence, are receiu'd for the brauer  
 fellowes : when many times their owne rudenesse is the  
 cause of their disgrace, and a little touch of their Aduersary  
 giues all that boisterous force the foyle. I deny not but ✓  
 5 that these men, who alwaies seeke to doe more then  
 inough, may some time happen on some thing that is good  
 and great ; but very seldome : And when it comes it doth  
 not recompence the rest of their ill. It sticks out perhaps,  
 and is more eminent, because all is sordide and vile about  
 10 it, as lights are more discern'd in a thick darknesse then  
 a faint shadow. I speake not this out of a hope to doe  
 good on any man against his will ; for I know, if it were  
 put to the question of theirs and mine, the worse would  
 finde more suffrages, because the most fauour common  
 15 errors. But I giue thee this warning, that there is a great  
 difference betweene those that (to gain the opinion of Copie)  
 vtter all they can, how euer vnfitly, and those that vse  
 election and a meane. For it is onely the disease of the  
 vnskillfull to thinke rude things greater then polish'd, or  
 20 scatter'd more numerous then compos'd.

IV. FROM *TIMBER, OR DISCOVERIES*

1620-35 ?

*NOTHING* in our Age, I have observ'd, is more pre- *Censura*  
 posterous then the *running Iudgements* upon *Poetry* *de Poetis.*  
 and *Poets* ; when wee shall heare those things commended  
 and cry'd up for the best writings, which a man would  
 25 scarce vouchsafe to wrap any wholesome drug in ; hee  
 would never light his *Tobacco* with them : And those men  
 almost nam'd for *Miracles*, who yet are so vile that if  
 a man should goe about to examine and correct them, hee  
 must make all they have done but one blot. Their good  
 30 is so intangled with their bad, as forcibly one must draw

on the others death with it. A Sponge dipt in Inke will doe all :

*Mart.-l. 4.  
epig. 10.*

*Comitetur punica librum*

*Spangia.*

Et paulò post,

5

*Non possunt < . . . > multæ, una litura potest.*

Yet their vices have not hurt them ; Nay, a great many they have profited, for they have beene lov'd for nothing else. And this false opinion growes strong against the best men, if once it take root with the *Ignorant*. *Cestius*, 10 in his time, was preferr'd to *Cicero*, so farre as the *Ignorant* durst. They learn'd him without booke, and had him often in their mouthes : But a man cannot imagine that thing so foolish or rude but will find and enjoy an Admirer ; at least, a Reader or *Spectator*. The Puppets 15 are seene now in despite of the Players ; *Heath's Epigrams* and the *Skullers Poems* have their applause. There are never wanting that dare preferre the worst *Preachers*, the worst *Pleaders*, the worst *Poets* ; not that the better have left to write or speake better, but that they 20 that heare them judge worse ; *Non illi pejus dicunt, sed hi corruptius judicant*. Nay, if it were put to the question of the Water-rimers workes against *Spencers*, I doubt not but they would find more *Suffrages* ; because the most favour common vices, out of a Prerogative the vulgar 25 have to lose their judgements, and like that which is naught.

*Poetry*, in this latter Age, hath prov'd but a meane *Mistresse* to such as have wholly addicted themselves to her, or given their names up to her family. They who 30 have but saluted her on the by, and now and then tendred their visits, shee hath done much for, and advanced in the way of their owne professions (both the *Law* and the *Gospel*) beyond all they could have hoped or done for themselves without her favour. Wherein she doth emulate the 35

*Taylor.*

judicious but preposterous bounty of the times *Grandes*, who accumulate all they can upon the *Parasite* or *Fresh-man* in their friendship, but thinke an old Client or honest servant bound by his place to write and starve.

5 *Indeed*, the multitude commend Writers as they doe Fencers or Wrastlers, who, if they come in robustiously and put for it with a deale of violence, are received for the *braver-fellowes*; when many times their owne rudenesse is a cause of their disgrace, and a slight touch of their  
10 Adversary gives all that boisterous force the foyle. But in these things the unskilfull are naturally deceiv'd, and judging wholly by the bulke, thinke rude things greater then polish'd, and scatter'd more numerous then composed. Nor thinke this only to be true in the sordid multitude,  
15 but the neater sort of our *Gallants*; for all are the multitude, only they differ in cloaths, not in judgement or understanding.

*I remember* the Players have often mentioned it as an honour to *Shakespeare*, that in his writing, whatsoever he  
20 penn'd, hee never blotted out <a> line. My answer hath beene, would he had blotted a thousand: Which they thought a malevolent speech. I had not told posterity this, but for their ignorance who choose that circumstance to commend their friend by wherein he most faulted; And  
25 to justifie mine owne candor, for I lov'd the man, and doe honour his memory, on this side Idolatry, as much as any. He was indeed honest, and of an open and free nature, had an excellent *Phantsie*, brave notions, and gentle expressions, wherein hee flow'd with that facility that sometime it was  
30 necessary he should be stop'd: *Sufflaminandus erat*, as *Augustus* said of *Haterius*. His wit was in his owne power; would the rule of it had beene so too. Many times hee fell into those things, could not escape laughter; As when hee said in the person of *Cæsar*, one speaking to  
35 him: *Cæsar, thou dost me wrong*. Hee replyed: *Cæsar*

*De Shake-  
speare  
nostra'.*

*did never wrong but with just cause*; and such like, which were ridiculous. But hee redeemed his vices with his vertues. There was ever more in him to be prayesd then to be pardoned.

*Ingemo-  
rum dis-  
crimina.*  
Not. 1.

*In the difference of wits*, I have observ'd there are many 5 notes: And it is a little *Maistry* to know them, to discern what every nature, every disposition will beare: For before wee sow our land, we should plough it. There are no fewer formes of minds then of bodies amongst us. The variety is incredible, and therefore wee must search. 10 Some are fit to make *Divines*, some *Poets*, some *Lawyers*, some *Physicians*, some to be sent to the plough and trades.

There is no doctrine will doe good where nature is wanting. Some wits are swelling and high, others low and still: Some hot and fiery, others cold and dull: One 15 must have a bridle, the other a spurre.

Not. 2.

*There* be some that are forward and bold, and these will doe every little thing easily: I meane that is hard by, and next them, which they will utter unretarded without any shamefastnesse. These never performe much, but quickly. 20 They are what they are on the sudden; they shew presently like *Graine* that, scatter'd on the top of the ground, shoots up, but takes no root, has a yellow blade, but the eare empty. They are wits of good promise at first, but there is an *Ingeni-stitium*: They stand still at 25 sixteene, they get no higher.

A wit-  
stand.

Not. 3.

You have others that labour onely to ostentation, and are ever more busie about the colours and surface of a worke then in the matter and foundation: For that is hid, the other is seene. 30

Not. 4.

*Martial.*  
*lib. II.*  
*epig. 90.*

*Others* that in composition are nothing but what is rough and broken: *Quæ per salebras atque saxa cadunt.* And if it would come gently, they trouble it of purpose. They would not have it run without rubs, as if that stile were more strong and manly, that stroke the eare with 35

a kind of unevenesse. These men erre not by chance, but knowingly and willingly; they are like men that affect a fashion by themselves, have some singularity in a Ruffe, Cloake, or Hat-band; or their beards specially cut to  
 5 provoke beholders, and set a marke upon themselves. They would be reprehended while they are look'd on. And this vice, one that is in authority with the rest, loving, delivers over to them to bee imitated: so that oft-times the faults which he fell into, the others seeke for. This is the  
 10 danger, when vice becomes a *Precedent*.

Others there are that have no composition at all, but *Not. 5.*  
 a kind of tuneing and riming fall in what they write. It runs and slides, and onely makes a sound. Womens-  
*Poets* they are call'd, as you have womens-*Taylors*.

15 *They write a verse as smooth, as soft as creame,  
 In which there is no torrent, nor scarce streame.*

You may sound these wits and find the depth of them with your middle finger. They are *Cream-bowle* or but puddle deepe.

20 *Some* that turne over all bookes, and are equally search- *Not. 6.*  
 ing in all papers; that write out of what they presently find or meet, without choice; by which meanes it happens that what they have discredited and impugned in one worke, they have before or after extolled the same in another.  
 25 Such are all the *Essayists*, even their Master *Mountaigne*. These in all they write confesse still what bookes they have read last, and therein their owne folly so much that they bring it to the *Stake* raw and undigested; not that the place did need it neither, but that they thought them-  
 30 selves furnished and would vent it.

*Some* againe, who, after they have got authority, or, *Not. 7.*  
 which is lesse, opinion, by their writings, to have read much, dare presently to faine whole bookes and Authors, and lye safely. For what never was will not easily be  
 35 found, not by the most *curious*.



Not. 8. *And some, by a cunning protestation against all reading, and false venditation of their owne naturals, thinke to divert the sagacity of their Readers from themselves, and coole the sent of their owne fox-like thefts, when yet they are so ranke as a man may find whole pages together 5 usurp'd from one Author: Their necessities compelling them to read for present use, which could not be in many books, and so come forth more ridiculously and palpably guilty then those who, because they cannot trace, they yet would slander their industry.* 10

Not. 9. *But the Wretcheder are the obstinate contemnners of all helpes and Arts, such as presuming on their owne Naturals, which perhaps are excellent, dare deride all diligence, and seeme to mock at the termes when they understand not the things, thinking that way to get off wittily with their 15 Ignorance. These are imitated often by such as are their Peeres in negligence, though they cannot be in nature: And they utter all they can thinke with a kind of violence and indisposition, unexamin'd, without relation either to person, place, or any fitnessse else; and the more wilfull 20 and stubborne they are in it, the more learned they are esteem'd of the multitude, through their excellent vice of Judgement: Who thinke those things the stronger that have no Art; as if to breake were better then to open, or to rent asunder gentler then to loose.* 25

Not. 10. *It cannot but come to passe that these men who commonly seeke to doe more then enough may sometimes happen on some thing that is good and great; but very seldome: And when it comes, it doth not recompence the rest of their ill. For their jests and their sentences, which 30 they onely and ambitiously seeke for, sticke out and are more eminent, because all is sordid and vile about them; as lights are more discern'd in a thick darknesse then a faint shadow. Now because they speake all they can, how ever unfitly they are thought to have the greater 35*

copy. Where the learned use ever election and a meane, they looke back to what they intended at first, and make all an even and proportion'd body. The true Artificer will not run away from nature, as hee were afraid of her, 5 or depart from life and the likenesse of Truth, but speake to the capacity of his hearers. And though his language differ from the vulgar somewhat, it shall not fly from all humanity, with the *Tamerlanes* and *Tamer-Chams* of the late Age, which had nothing in them but the *scenicall* 10 strutting and furious vociferation to warrant them to the ignorant gapers. Hee knowes it is his onely Art so to carry it, as none but Artificers perceive it. In the meane time perhaps hee is call'd barren, dull, leane, a poore Writer, or by what contumelious word can come in their 15 cheeks, by these men who, without labour, judgement, knowledge, or almost sense, are received or preferr'd before him. He gratulates them and their fortune. An other Age, or juster men, will acknowledge the vertues of his studies, his wisdom in dividing, his subtilty in arguing, 20 with what strength hee doth inspire his Readers, with what sweetnesse hee strokes them; in inveighing, what sharpnesse; in Jest, what urbanity hee uses; How he doth raigne in mens affections; how invade and breake in upon them, and makes their minds like the thing he writes. 25 Then in his Elocution to behold what word is proper, which hath ornament, which height, what is beautifully translated, where figures are fit, which gentle, which strong to shew the composition *Manly*: And how hee hath avoyded faint, obscure, obscene, sordid, humble, imprôper, 30 or effeminate *Phrase*, which is not only prais'd of the most, but commended, which is worse, especially for that it is naught.

*I know* no disease of the Soule but *Ignorance*, not of *Ignorantia* the Arts and Sciences, but of it selfe: Yet relating to those *animæ.* 35 it is a pernicious *evill*, the darkner of mans life, the disturber

of his *Reason*, and common Confunder of Truth, with which a man goes groping in the darke, no otherwise then if hee were blind. Great understandings are most wrack'd and troubled with it: Nay, sometimes they will rather choose to dye then not to know the things they study for. 5  
Thinke then what an evill it is, and what good the contrary.

*Scientia.*

*Knowledge* is the action of the *Soule*, and is perfect without the *senses*, as having the seeds of all *Science* and *Vertue* in its selfe, but not without the service of the *senses*; by those Organs the *Soule* workes: She is a perpetuall 10  
Agent, prompt and subtile, but often flexible and erring, intangling her selfe like a Silke-worme: But her *Reason* is a weapon with two edges, and cuts through. In her Indagations oft-times new Sents put her by, and shee takes in errors into her by the same conduits she doth Truths. 15

*Otium  
Studiorum*

*Ease* and relaxation are profitable to all studies. The mind is like a Bow, the stronger by being unbent. But the temper in Spirits is all, when to command a mans wit, when to favour it. I have knowne a man vehement on both sides, that knew no meane, either to intermit his studies or 20  
call upon them againe. When hee hath set himselfe to writing, hee would joyne night to day, presse upon himselfe without release, not minding it till hee fainted; and when hee left off, resolve himselfe into all sports and loosenesse againe, that it was almost a despaire to draw him to his 25  
booke: But once got to it, hee grew stronger and more earnest by the ease. His whole Powers were renew'd; he would worke out of himselfe what hee desired, but with such'excesse as his study could not bee rul'd; hee knew not how to dispose his owne Abilities, or husband them; 30  
hee was of that immoderate power against himselfe. Nor was hee only a strong, but an absolute *Speaker* and *Writer*; but his subtilty did not shew it selfe; his judgement thought that a vice: For the ambush hurts more that is hid. Hee never forc'd his language, nor went out of the high way of 35

*speaking*, but for some great necessity or apparent profit. For hee denied *Figures* to be invented for ornament, but for ayde ; and still thought it an extreme madnesse to bend or wrest that which ought to be right.

5 It is no *Wonder* mens eminence appeares but in their owne way. *Virgils* felicity left him in prose, as *Tullies* *Et stili eminentia.* forsooke him in verse. *Salusts* Orations are read in the honour of Story ; yet the most eloquent *Plato's* speech, which he made for *Socrates*, is neither worthy or the *Patron*  
 10 or the *Person* defended. Nay, in the same kind of *Oratory*, and where the matter is one, you shall have him that reasons strongly, open negligently ; another that prepares well, not fit so well ; and this happens, not onely to braines, but to bodies. One can wrastle well, another runne well,  
 15 a third leape or throw the barre, a fourth lift or stop a Cart going : Each hath his way of strength. So in other creatures, some dogs are for the Deere, some for the wild Boare, some are Fox-hounds, some Otter-hounds. Nor are all horses for the Coach or Saddle ; some are for  
 20 the Cart and Panniers.

*I have* knowne many excellent men that would speake *De claris Oratoribus.* suddenly, to the admiration of their hearers, who upon study and premeditation have beene forsaken by their owne wits, and no way answered their fame. Their eloquence  
 25 was greater then their reading ; and the things they uttered, better then those they knew. Their fortune deserved better of them then their care. For men of present spirits, and of greater wits then study, doe please more in the things they invent then in those they bring. And  
 30 I have heard some of them compell'd to speake, out of necessity, that have so infinitely exceeded themselves, as it was better both for them and their Auditory that they were so surpriz'd, not prepar'd. Nor was it safe then to crosse them, for their adversary, their anger made them  
 35 more eloquent. Yet these men I could not but love and

admire, that they return'd to their studies. They left not diligence, as many doe, when their rashnesse prosper'd. For diligence is a great ayde, even to an indifferent wit, when wee are not contented with the examples of our owne Age, but would know the face of the former. Indeed, 5 the more wee conferre with, the more wee profit by, if the persons be chosen.

*Dominus  
Verulanus.*

One, though hee be excellent and the chiefe, is not to bee imitated alone. For never no Imitator ever grew up to his *Author*; likenesse is alwayes on this side Truth. Yet 10 there hapn'd in my time one noble *Speaker* who was full of gravity in his speaking. His language, where hee could spare or passe by a jest, was nobly *ensorious*. No man ever spake more neatly, more presly, more weightily, or suffer'd lesse emptinesse, less idlenesse, in what hee 15 utter'd. No member of his speech but consisted of the owne graces. His hearers could not cough or looke aside from him without losse. Hee commanded where hee spoke, and had his Judges angry and pleased at his devotion. No man had their affections more in his power. 20 The feare of every man that heard him was lest hee should make an end.

*Scriptorum  
Catalogus.*

*Cicero* is said to bee the only wit that the people of Rome had equall'd to their *Empire*. *Ingenium par imperio*. We have had many, and in their severall Ages (to take in 25 but the former *Seculum*) *Sir Thomas Moore*, the elder *Wiat*, *Henry*, Earle of *Surrey*, *Chaloner*, *Smith*, *Eliot*, *B. Gardiner*, were for their times admirable; and the more because they began Eloquence with us. *Sir Nico: Bacon* was singular and almost alone in the beginning of 30 Queene *Elizabeths* times. *Sir Philip Sidney* and Mr. *Hooker*, in different matter, grew great Masters of wit and language, and in whom all vigour of Invention and strength of judgement met. The Earle of *Essex*, noble and high, and *Sir Walter Rawleigh*, not to be contemn'd 35



either for judgement or stile ; Sir *Henry Savile*, grave, and truly letter'd ; Sir *Edwin Sandes*, excellent in both ; Lo: *Egerton*, the Chancellor, a grave and great Orator, and best when hee was provok'd. But his learned and able, though  
 5 unfortunate, *Successor* is he who hath fill'd up all numbers, and perform'd that in our tongue which may be compar'd or preferr'd either to insolent *Greece* or haughty *Rome*. In short, within his view and about his times were all the wits borne that could honour a language or helpe study. Now  
 10 things daily fall ; wits grow downe-ward and *Eloquence* growes back-ward : So that hee may be nam'd and stand as the *marke* and ἀκμή of our language.

*I have* ever observ'd it to have beene the office of a wise Patriot, among the greatest affaires of the *State*, to take care  
 15 of the *Common-wealth* of Learning. For Schooles, they are the *Seminaries* of State ; and nothing is worthier the study of a States-man then that part of the *Republicke* which wee call the *advancement* of Letters. Witnessse the care of *Iulius Cæsar*, who in the heat of the civill warre writ his  
 20 bookes of *Analogie*, and dedicated them to *Tully*. This made the late Lord S. *Albane* entitle his worke *nouum Organum* : Which, though by the most of superficiall men, who cannot get beyond the Title of *Nominals*, it is not penetrated nor understood, it really openeth all defects  
 25 of Learning whatsoever, and is a Booke

*Qui longum noto scriptori porriget ævum.*

*Horat: de art: Poetica.*

My conceit of his Person was never increased toward him by his place or honours. But I have and doe reverence him for the greatnesse that was onely proper  
 30 to himselfe, in that hee seem'd to mee ever, by his worke, one of the greatest men, and most worthy of admiration, that had beene in many Ages. In his adversity I ever prayed that *God* would give him strength ; for *Greatnesse* hee could not want. Neither could I condole in a word or

syllable for him, as knowing no Accident could doe harme to vertue, but rather helpe to make it manifest.

*De corruptela  
morum.*

*There* cannot be one colour of the mind, an other of the wit. If the mind be staid, grave, and compos'd, the wit is so; that vitiated, the other is blowne and deflowr'd. 5 Doe wee not see, if the mind languish, the members are dull? Looke upon an effeminate person; his very gate confesseth him. If a man be fiery, his motion is so; if angry, 'tis troubled and violent. So that wee may conclude: Wheresoever manners and fashions are corrupted, 10 Language is. It imitates the publicke riot. The excesse of Feasts and apparell are the notes of a sick State, and the wantonnesse of language, of a sick mind.

. . . . .

*De malign:  
studentium.*

*There* be some men are borne only to sucke out the poyson of bookes: *Habent venenum pro victu; imò, pro* 15 *deliciis.* And such are they that only relish the obscene and foule things in *Poets*: Which makes the profession taxed. But by whom? men that watch for it, and had they not had this hint, are so unjust valuers of Letters as they thinke no Learning good but what brings in gaine. 20 It shewes they themselves would never have beene of the professions they are, but for the profits and fees. But if an other Learning, well used, can instruct to good life, informe manners, no lesse perswade and leade men then they threaten and compell, and have no reward, is it there- 25 fore the worse study? I could never thinke the study of *Wisdom*e confin'd only to the Philosopher, or of *Piety* to the *Divine*, or of *State* to the *Politicke*: But that he which can faine a *Common-wealth* (which is the *Poet*), can gowne it with *Counsels*, strengthen it with *Lawes*, correct it 30 with *Iudgements*, informe it with *Religion* and *Morals*, is all these. Wee doe not require in him meere *Elocution*, or an excellent faculty in verse, but the exact knowledge of all vertues and their Contraries, with ability to render the one

lov'd, the other hated, by his proper embattaling them. The Philosophers did insolently, to challenge only to themselves that which the greatest *Generals* and gravest *Counsellors* never durst. For such had rather doe then  
5 promise the best things.

Poetry and Picture are Arts of a like nature, and both are *Poesis et Pictura.*  
busie about imitation. It was excellently said of *Plutarch*,  
*Poetry* was a speaking Picture, and *Picture* a mute Poesie.  
For they both invent, faine, and devise many things, and  
10 accommodate all they invent to the use and service of  
nature. Yet of the two the Pen is more noble then the  
Pencill: For that can speake to the Understanding, the other  
but to the Sense. They both behold pleasure and profit as  
their common Object; but should abstaine from all base  
15 pleasures, lest they should erre from their end, and, while  
they seeke to better mens minds, destroy their manners.  
They both are borne *Artificers*, not made. Nature is more  
powerfull in them then study.

Whosoever loves not *Picture* is injurious to Truth and *De Pi-ctura.*  
20 all the wisdom of *Poetry*. Picture is the invention of  
Heaven, the most ancient and most a kinne to Nature. It  
is it selfe a silent worke, and alwayes of one and the same  
habit: Yet it doth so enter and penetrate the inmost  
affection (being done by an excellent Artificer) as some-  
25 times it orecomes the power of speech and oratory. There  
are diverse graces in it, so are there in the Artificers. One  
excels in care, another in reason, a third in easinesse,  
a fourth in nature and grace. Some have diligence and  
comelinesse, but they want Majesty. They can expresse  
30 a humane forme in all the graces, sweetnesse, and elegancy,  
but they misse the Authority. They can hit nothing but  
smooth cheeks; they cannot expresse roughnesse or  
gravity. Others aspire to Truth so much as they are  
rather Lovers of likenesse then beauty. *Zeuxis* and

*Parrhasius* are said to be contemporaries. The first found out the reason of lights and shadowes in Picture; the other more subtilly examined the lines.

*De stylo.*

In Picture, light is requir'd no lesse then shadow; so in stile, height as well as humblenesse. But beware they be 5 not too humble, as *Pliny* pronounc'd of *Regulus* writings: You would thinke them written, not on a child, but by a child. Many, out of their owne obscene Apprehensions, refuse proper and fit words, as *occupie*, *nature*, and the like: So the curious industry in some, of having all alike 10 good, hath come neerer a vice then a vertue.

*De progress.  
Picturæ.*

Picture tooke her faining from Poetry; from Geometry her rule, compasse, lines, proportion, and the whole Symmetry. *Parrhasius* was the first wan reputation by adding Symmetry to Picture; hee added subtilty to the 15 countenance, elegancy to the haire, love-lines to the face, and by the publike voice of all Artificers, deserved honour in the outer lines. *Eupompus* gave it splendor by numbers and other elegancies. From the *Opticks* it drew reasons by which it considered how things plac'd at distance and 20 a farre off should appeare lesse; how above or beneath the head should deceive the eye, &c. So from thence it tooke shadowes, reccessor, light, and heightnings. From morall *Philosophy* it tooke the soule, the expression of Senses, Perturbations, Manners, when they would paint an angry 25 person, a proud, an inconstant, an ambitious, a brave, a magnanimous, a just, a mercifull, a compassionate, an humble, a dejected, a base, and the like. They made all heightnings bright, all shadowes darke, all swellings from a plane, all solids from breaking. See where he complains 30 of their painting *Chimæra's*, by the vulgar unaptly called *Grottesque*: Saying that men who were borne truly to study and emulate nature did nothing but make monsters against nature, which *Horace* so laught at. The Art *Plasticke* was moulding in clay or potters earth anciently. This is 35

*Plin. lib.  
35. c. 2, 5,  
6 & 7.  
Vitruv. li.  
8. & 7.*

*Horat. in  
arte Poet.*

the Parent of *Statuary*, sculpture, *Graving*, and *Picture*; cutting in brasse and marble all serve under her. *Socrates* taught *Parrhasius* and *Clito*, two noble Statuaries, first to expresse manners by their looks in Imagery. *Polygnotus* and *Aglaophon* were ancients. After them *Zeuxis*, who was the Law-giver to all Painters after *Parrhasius*. They were contemporaries, and liv'd both about *Philips* time, the Father of *Alexander* the Great. There liv'd in this latter Age six famous Painters in *Italy*, who were excellent and emulous of the Ancients: *Raphael de Urbino*, *Michel Angelo Buonarota*, *Titian*, *Antonie of Correggio*, *Sebastian of Venice*, *Iulio Romano*, and *Andrea Sartorio*.

. . . . .

For a man to write well, there are required three *De stylo, et*  
Necessaries: To reade the best Authors, observe the best *optimo*  
15 Speakers, and much exercise of his owne style. In style, *scribendi*  
to consider what ought to be written and after what *genere*.  
manner: Hee must first thinke and excogitate his matter,  
then choose his words, and examine the weight of either.  
Then take care, in placing and ranking both matter and  
20 words, that the composition be comely; and to doe this  
with diligence and often. No matter how slow the style  
be at first, so it be labour'd and accurate; seeke the best,  
and be not glad of the forward conceits, or first words,  
that offer themselves to us; but judge of what wee invent,  
25 and order what wee approve. Repeat often what wee  
have formerly written; which beside that it helps the  
consequence, and makes the juncture better, it quickens  
the heate of imagination, that often cooles in the time of  
setting downe, and gives it new strength, as if it grew  
30 lustier by the going back. As wee see in the contention  
of leaping, they jumpe farthest that fetch their race largest;  
or, as in throwing a Dart or Iavelin, wee force back our  
armes to make our loose the stronger. Yet, if we have a  
faire gale of wind, I forbid not the steering out of our



sayle, so the favour of the gale deceive us not. For all that wee invent doth please us in the conception or birth, else we would never set it downe. But the safest is to returne to our Judgement, and handle over againe those things the easinesse of which might make them justly 5 suspected. So did the best Writers in their beginnings; they impos'd upon themselves care and industry. They did nothing rashly. They obtain'd first to write well, and then custome made it easie and a habit. By little and little their matter shew'd it selfe to 'hem more plentifully, 10 their words answer'd, their composition followed; and all, as in a well-order'd family, presented it selfe in the place. So that the summe of all is: Ready writing makes not good writing, but good writing brings on ready writing. Yet when wee thinke wee have got the faculty, it is even 15 then good to resist it, as to give a Horse a check sometimes with bit, which doth not so much stop his course as stirre his mettle. Again, whether a mans *Genius* is best able to reach, thither it should more and more contend, lift, and dilate it selfe; as men of low stature raise them- 20 selves on their toes, and so oft times get even, if not eminent. Besides, as it is fit for grown and able Writers to stand of themselves, and worke with their owne strength, to trust and endeavour by their owne faculties, so it is fit for the beginner and learner to study others and the best. 25 For the mind and memory are more sharply exercis'd in comprehending an other mans things then our owne; and such as accustome themselves and are familiar with the best Authors shall ever and anon find somewhat of them in themselves, and in the expression of their minds, even 30 when they feele it not, be able to utter something like theirs, which hath an Authority above their owne. Nay, sometimes it is the reward of a mans study, the praise of quoting an other man fitly: And though a man be more prone and able for one kind of writing then another, 35

yet hee must exercise all. For as in an Instrument, so in style, there must be a Harmonie and consent of parts.

I take this labour in teaching others, that they should *Precipien-*  
 5 not be alwayes to bee taught, and I would bring my *di modi.*  
 Precepts into practise. For rules are ever of lesse force and valem then experiments: Yet with this purpose, rather to shew the right way to those that come after, then to detect any that have slipt before by errorr; and I hope  
 10 it will bee more profitable: For men doe more willingly listen, and with more favour, to precept then reprehension. Among diverse opinions of an Art, and most of them contrary in themselves, it is hard to make election; and therefore, though a man cannot invent new things after  
 15 so many, he may doe a welcome worke yet to helpe posterity to judge rightly of the old. But Arts and Precepts avails nothing, except nature be beneficiall and ayding. And therefore these things are no more written to a dull disposition then rules of husbandry to a barren  
 20 Soyle. No precepts will profit a Foole, no more then beauty will the blind, or musicke the deafe. As wee should take care that our style in writing be neither dry nor empty, wee should looke againe it be not winding, or wanton with far-fetcht descriptions: Either is a vice. But  
 25 that is worse which proceeds out of want then that which riots out of plenty. The remedy of fruitfulnessse is easie, but no labour will helpe the contrary. I will like and praise some things in a young Writer which yet, if hee continue in, I cannot but justly hate him for the same.  
 30 There is a time to bee given all things for maturity, and that even your Countrey-husband-man can teach, who to a young plant will not put the proyning knife, because it seemes to feare the iron, as not able to admit the scarre. No more would I tell a greene Writer all his faults, lest  
 35 I should make him grieve and faint, and at last despaire.

For nothing doth more hurt then to make him so afraid of all things as hee can endeavour nothing. Therefore youth ought to be instructed betimes, and in the best things; for we hold those longest wee take soonest: As the first sent of a Vessell lasts, and that tinct the wooll first 5 receives. Therefore a Master should temper his owne powers, and descend to the others infirmity. If you powre a glut of water upon a Bottle, it receives little of it; but with a Funnell, and by degrees, you shall fill many of them, and spill little of your owne; to their capacity they 10 will all receive and be full. And as it is fit to reade the best Authors to youth first, so let them be of the openest and clearest: As *Livy* before *Salust*, *Sydney* before *Donne*; and beware of letting them taste *Gower* or *Chaucer* at first, lest falling too much in love with Antiquity, and not 15 apprehending the weight, they grow rough and barren in language onely. When their judgements are firme and out of danger, let them reade both the old and the new; but no lesse take heed that their new flowers and sweetnesse doe not as much corrupt as the others drinesse and 20 squallor, if they choose not carefully. *Spencer*, in affecting the Ancients, writ no Language: Yet I would have him read for his matter, but as *Virgil* read *Ennius*. The reading of *Homer* and *Virgil* is counsell'd by *Quintilian* as the best way of informing youth and confirming man. 25 For, besides that the mind is rais'd with the height and sublimity of such a verse, it takes spirit from the greatnesse of the matter, and is tinted with the best things. *Tragicke* and *Liricke* Poetry is good too; and *Comicke* with the best, if the manners of the Reader be once in 30 safety. In the *Greeke* Poets, as also in *Plautus*, wee shall see the Oeconomy and disposition of *Poems* better observed then in *Terence* and the later, who thought the sole grace and vertue of their Fable the sticking in of sentences, as ours doe the forcing in of jests.

Wee should not protect our sloath with the patronage *Fals.*  
of difficulty. It is a false quarrell against nature, that shee *querel.*  
helpes understanding but in a few ; when the most part *fugiend.*  
of mankind are inclin'd by her thither, if they would take  
5 the paines, no lesse then birds to fly, horses to run, &c. :  
Which if they lose, it is through their owne sluggishnesse,  
and by that meanes become her prodigies, not her children.  
I confesse, nature in children is more patient of labour in  
study then in Age ; for the sense of the paine, the judge-  
10 ment of the labour is absent ; they doe not measure what  
they have done. And it is the thought and consideration  
that affects us more then the wearinesse it selfe. *Plato* *Platonis*  
was not content with the Learning that *Athens* could give *Peregrina-*  
him, but sail'd into *Italy* for *Pythagora's* knowledge : And *tio in*  
15 yet not thinking himselfe sufficiently inform'd, went into *Italian.*  
*Egypt* to the Priests, and learned their mysteries. Hee  
labour'd, so must wee. Many things may be learn'd  
together, and perform'd in one point of time, as Musicians  
exercise their memory, their voice, their fingers, and  
20 sometime their head and feet at once. And so a Preacher  
in the invention of matter, election of words, composition  
of gesture, looke, pronounciation, motion, useth all these  
faculties at once. And if wee can expresse this variety  
together, why should not diverse studies at diverse houres  
25 delight, when the variety is able alone to refresh and  
repaire us ? As, when a man is weary of writing, to reade ;  
and then againe of reading, to write. Wherein howsoever  
wee doe many things, yet are wee, in a sort, still fresh to  
what wee begin ; wee are recreated with change, as the  
30 stomacke is with meats. But some will say this variety  
breeds confusion, and makes that either wee loose all,  
or hold no more then the last. Why doe wee not then  
perswade husbandmen that they should not till Land,  
helpe it with Marle, Lyme, and Compost, plant Hop-  
35 gardens, prune trees, looke to Bee-hives, reare sheepe,

and all other Cattell at once? It is easier to doe many things and continue, then to doe one thing long.

*Præcept.  
Element.*

It is not the passing through these Learnings that hurts us, but the dwelling and sticking about them. To descend to those extreame anxieties and foolish cavils of *Gram-* 5  
*marians* is able to breake a wit in pieces; being a worke of manifold misery and vaineresse to bee *Elementarij senes*. Yet even Letters are, as it were, the Banke of words, and restore themselves to an Author as the pawnes of Language. But talking and Eloquence are not the same: to speake, 10  
and to speake well, are two things. A foole may talke, but a wise man speakes, and out of the observation, knowledge, and use of things. Many Writers perplexe their Readers and Hearers with meere *Non-sense*. Their writings need sunshine. Pure and neat Language I love, 15  
yet plaine and customary. A barbarous Phrase hath often made mee out of love with a good sense, and doubtfull writing hath wrackt mee beyond my patience. The reason why a *Poet* is said that hee ought to have all knowledges, is that hee should not be ignorant of the most, especially 20  
of those hee will handle. And indeed, when the attaining of them is possible, it were a sluggish and base thing to despaire. For frequent imitation of any thing becomes a habit quickly. If a man should prosecute as much as could be said of every thing, his worke would find no end. 25

*De orationis dignitate.*

*Speech* is the only benefit man hath to expresse his excellencie of mind above other creatures. It is the Instrument of *Society*. Therefore *Mercury*, who is the President of Language, is called *Deorum hominumque* 30  
*interpretes*. In all speech, words and sense are as the body and the soule. The sense is as the life and soule of Language, without which all words are dead. Sense is wrought out of experience, the knowledge of humane life and actions, or of the liberall Arts, which the *Greeks* call'd *Ἐγκυκλοπαιδείαν*. Words are the Peoples, yet there is a choise of them to 35

*Ἐγκυκλο-  
παιδεία.*



be made. For *Verborum delectus origo est eloquentiæ*. Iulius Cæsar. Of words, see Hor. de Art. Poetic. Quintil. l. 8. Ludov. Vives, pag. 6 & 7. They are to be chose according to the persons wee make speake, or the things wee speake of. Some are of the Campe, some of the Councell-board, some of the Shop, 5 some of the Sheepe-coat, some of the Pulpit, some of the Barre, &c. And herein is seene their Elegance and Propriety, when wee use them fitly, and draw them forth to their just strength and nature by way of Translation or *Metaphore*. But in this Translation wee must only serve *Metaphora*.  
 10 necessity (*Nam temerè nihil transfertur à prudenti*), or commodity, which is a kind of necessity; that is, when wee either absolutely want a word to expresse by, and that is necessity; or when wee have not so fit a word, and that is commodity. As when wee avoid losse by it, and escape  
 15 obscenenesse, and gaine in the grace and property which helps significance. *Metaphors* farfet hinder to be understood; and affected, lose their grace. Or when the person fetcheth his translations from a wrong place: As if a Privie-Counsellor should at the Table take his *Metaphore*  
 20 from a Dicing-house, or Ordinary, or a Vintners Vault; or a Justice of Peace draw his similitudes from the *Mathematicks*; or a *Divine* from a Bawdy-house, or Tavernes; or a Gentleman of *Northampton-shire*, *Warwick-shire*, or the *Mid-land*, should fetch all his Illustrations  
 25 to his countrey neighbours from shipping, and tell them of the maine *sheat* and the Boulin. *Metaphors* are thus many times deform'd, as in him that said, *Castratam mortè Africani Rempublicam*. And an other, *stercus curiæ Glauciam*. And *Canâ nive conspuat Alpes*. All attempts  
 30 that are new in this kind are dangerous, and somewhat hard, before they be softned with use. A man coynes not a new word without some perill and lesse fruit; for if it happen to be received, the praise is but moderate; if refus'd, the scorne is assur'd. Yet wee must adventure;  
 35 for things at first hard and rough are by use made tender

and gentle. It is an honest errour that is committed, following great *Chieftes*.

*Consuetudo.*

*Custome* is the most certaine Mistresse of Language, as the publicke stampe makes the current money. But wee must not be too frequent with the mint, every day coyning: 5 Nor fetch words from the extreme and utmost ages; since the chiefe vertue of a style is perspicuitie, and nothing so vitious in it as to need an Interpreter. Words borrow'd of Antiquity doe lend a kind of Majesty to style, and are not without their delight sometimes. For they have the 10

*Authoritas.* Authority of yeares, and out of their intermission doe win to themselves a kind of grace-like newnesse. But the eldest of the present, and newest of the past Language, is the best. For what was the ancient Language, which some men so doate upon, but the ancient Custome? Yet 15 when I name Custome, I understand not the vulgar Custome: For that were a precept no lesse dangerous to Language then life, if wee should speake or live after the manners of the vulgar: But that I call Custome of speech, which is the consent of the Learned; as Custome of life, 20 which is the consent of the good. *Virgill* was most loving of Antiquity; yet how rarely doth hee insert *aquai* and *pictai*! *Lucretius* is scabrous and rough in these; hee seekes 'hem: As some doe *Chaucerismes* with us, which were better expung'd and banish'd. Some words are to 25 be cull'd out for ornament and colour, as wee gather flowers to straw houses or make Garlands; but they are better when they grow to our style, as in a Meadow, where, though the meere grasse and greennesse delights, yet the variety of flowers doth heighten and beautifie. Marry, 30 we must not play or riot too much with them, as in *Paronomasies*; nor use too swelling or ill-sounding words: *Quæ per salebras altaque saxa cadunt*. It is true, there is no sound but shall find some Lovers, as the bitter'st confections are gratefull to some palats. Our composition 35

*Perspicuitas.*  
*Venustas.*

*Chaucerisme.*

*Paronomasia.*

must bee more accurate in the beginning and end then in the midst, and in the end more then in the beginning; for through the midst the streame beares us. And this is attain'd by Custome more then care or diligence. Wee  
 5 must expresse readily and fully, not profusely. There is difference betweene a liberall and a prodigall hand. As it is a great point of Art, when our matter requires it, to enlarge and veere out all sayle, so to take it in and contract it is of no lesse praise when the Argument doth aske  
 10 it. Either of them hath their fitnessse in the place. A good man alwayes profits by his endeavour, by his helpe; yea, when he is absent; nay, when he is dead, by his example and memory. So good Authors in their style: *De stylo.*  
 A strict and succinct style is that where you can take  
 15 away nothing without losse, and that losse to be manifest. Tacitus.  
 The brieft style is that which expresth much in little. *The Laconicke.*  
 The concise style, which expresth not enough, but leaves somewhat to bee understood. The abrupt style, which Suetonius.  
 hath many breaches, and doth not seeme to end but fall. Seneca & Fabianus.  
 20 The congruent and harmonious fitting of parts in a sentence hath almost the fastning and force of knitting and connexion: As in stones well squar'd, which will rise strong a great way without mortar. Periods are beautifull *Periodi.*  
 when they are not too long; for so they have their strength  
 25 too, as in a Pike or Javelin. As wee must take the care that our words and sense bee cleare, so if the obscurity happen through the Hearers or Readers want of understanding, I am not to answer for them, no more then for their not listning or marking; I must neither find them  
 30 eares nor mind. But a man cannot put a word so in sense but some thing about it will illustrate it, if the Writer understand himselfe. For Order helps much to Perspicuity, as Confusion hurts. *Rectitudo lucem adfert; obliquitas et circumductio offuscat.* We should therefore  
 35 speake what wee can the neerest way, so as wee keepe our

*Obscuritas  
offundit  
tenebras.*

*Superlatio.*

gate, not leape ; for too short may as well be not let into the memory, as too long not kept in. Whatsoever looseth the grace and clearenesse converts into a Riddle ; the obscurity is mark'd, but not the valew. That perisheth, and is past by, like the Pearle in the Fable. Our style 5 should be like a skeine of silke, to be carried and found by the right thred, not ravel'd and perplex'd ; then all is a knot, a heape. There are words that doe as much raise a style as others can deprese it. Superlation and overmuchnesse amplifies. It may be above faith, but never 10 above a meane. It was ridiculous in *Cestius*, when hee said of *Alexander* :

*Fremit Oceanus, quasi indignetur, quòd terras relinquo ;*  
But propitiously from *Virgil* :

*Credas innare reuulsas  
Cycladas.*

15

*Cæsar.  
comment:  
circa fin.*

Hee doth not say it was so, but seem'd to be so. Although it be somewhat incredible, that is excus'd before it be spoken. But there are *Hyperboles* which will become one Language, that will by no meanes admit another. As 20 *Eos esse P. R. exercitus, qui cælum possint perrumpere* : who would say this with us, but a mad man ? Therefore wee must consider in every tongue what is us'd, what receiv'd. *Quintilian* warnes us that in no kind of Translation, or *Metaphore*, or *Allegory*, wee make a turne from what wee 25 began ; As, if wee fetch the originall of our *Metaphore* from sea and billowes, wee end not in flames and ashes : It is a most fowle inconsequence. Neither must wee draw out our *Allegory* too long, lest either wee make our selves obscure, or fall into affectation, which is childish. But 30 why doe men depart at all from the right and naturall wayes of speaking ? Sometimes for necessity, when wee are driven, or thinke it fitter, to speake that in obscure words, or by circumstance, which utter'd plainly would

offend the hearers: Or to avoid obscenenesse, or sometimes for pleasure and variety, as Travailers turne out of the high way, drawne either by the commodity of a foot-path, or the delicacy or freshnesse of the fields. And all  
5 this is call'd ἐσχηματισμένη, or figur'd Language.

*Language* most shewes a man: speake, that I may see thee. It springs out of the most retired and inmost parts of us, and is the Image of the Parent of it, the mind. No glasse renders a mans forme or likenesse so true as his  
10 speech. Nay, it is likened to a man; and as we consider feature and composition in a man, so words in Language, in the greatnesse, aptnesse, sound, structure, and harmony of it. Some men are tall and bigge, so some Language is high and great. Then the words are chosen, their sound  
15 ample, the composition full, the absolution plenteous, and powr'd out, all grave, sinnewye, and strong. Some are little and Dwarfes; so of speech, it is humble and low, the words poore and flat, the members and *Periods* thinne and weake, without knitting or number. The middle are  
20 of a just stature. There the Language is plaine and pleasing: even without stopping, round without swelling; all well-torn'd, compos'd, elegant, and accurate. The vitious Language is vast and gaping, swelling and irregular; when it contends to be high, full of *Rocke*,  
25 Mountaine, and pointednesse: As it affects to be low, it is abject, and creeps, full of bogs and holes. And according to their Subject these stiles vary, and lose their names: For that which is high and lofty, declaring excellent matter, becomes vast and tumorous, Speaking of petty and inferiour  
30 things: so that which was even and apt in a meane and plaine subject, will appeare most poore and humble in a high Argument. Would you not laugh to meet a great Counsellor of state in a flat cap, with his trunck hose, and a hobby-horse Cloake, his Gloves under his girdle, and  
35 yond Haberdasher in a velvet Gowne, furr'd with sables?

*Oratio  
imago  
animi.*

*Structura  
& statura.*

*Sublimis.  
Humilis,  
pumila.*

*Mediocris  
Plana &  
placida.*

*Vitiosa  
oratio,  
vasta.*

*Tumens.  
Enormis.  
Affectata.  
Abjecta.*



*Figura.*

*Cutis sive  
Cortex.  
Compo-  
sitio.*

*Carnosa.*

*Adipata.*

*Redun-  
dans.*

*Iejuna,  
macilenta,  
strigosa.*

*Ossea &  
nervosa.*

*Notæ  
Domini St.  
Albani de  
doctrin:  
intemper.*

There is a certaine latitude in these things, by which wee find the degrees. The next thing to the stature is the figure and feature in Language; that is, whether it be round and streight, which consists of short and succinct *Periods*, numerous and polish'd; or square and firme, 5 which is to have equall and strong parts every where answerable and weighed. The third is the skinne and coat, which rests in the well-joyning, cementing, and coagmentation of words; when as it is smooth, gentle, and sweet, like a Table upon which you may runne your 10 finger without rubs, and your nayle cannot find a joynt; not horrid, rough, wrinkled, gaping, or chapt. After these the flesh, blood, and bones come in question. Wee say it is a fleshy style, when there is much *Periphrasis* and circuit of words; and when with more then enough, it 15 growes fat and corpulent; *Arvina orationis*, full of suet and tallow. It hath blood and juyce when the words are proper and apt, their sound sweet, and the *Phrase* neat and pick'd. *Oratio uncta, & benè pasta*. But where there is Redundancy, both the blood and juyce are faulty and 20 vitious: *Redundat sanguine, quâ multò plus dicit, quàm necesse est*. Juyce in Language is somewhat lesse then blood; for if the words be but becomming and signifying, and the sense gentle, there is Juyce; but where that wanteth, the Language is thinne, flagging, poore, starv'd, 25 scarce covering the bone, and shewes like stones in a sack. Some men, to avoid Redundancy, runne into that; and while they strive to have no ill blood or Juyce, they loose their good. There be some styles, againe, that have not lesse blood, but lesse flesh and corpulence. These are 30 bony and sinnewy: *Ossa habent, et nervos*.

It was well noted by the late L. St. *Alban*, that the study of words is the first distemper of Learning; Vaine matter the second; And a third distemper is deceit, or the likenesse of truth; Imposture held up by credulity. All 35

these are the Cobwebs of Learning, and to let them grow in us is either sluttish or foolish. Nothing is more ridiculous then to make an Author a *Dictator*, as the schooles have done *Aristotle*. The dammage is infinite knowledge receives by it. For to many things a man should owe but a temporary beliefe, and a suspension of his owne Judgement, not an absolute resignation of himselfe, or a perpetuall captivity. Let *Aristotle* and others have their dues; but if wee can make farther Discoveries of truth and fitnessse then they, why are we envied? Let us beware, while wee strive to adde, wee doe not diminish or deface; wee may improve, but not augment. By discrediting falshood, Truth growes in request. Wee must not goe about like men anguish'd and perplex'd for vitious affectation of praise, but calmly study the separation of opinions, find the errours have intervned, awake Antiquity, call former times into question; but make no parties with the present, nor follow any fierce undertakers, mingle no matter of doubtfull credit with the simplicity of truth, but gently stirre the mould about the root of the Question, and avoid all digladiations, facility of credit, or superstitious simplicity; seeke the consonancy and concatenation of Truth; stoope only to point of necessity, and what leads to convenience. Then make exact animadversion where style hath degenerated, where flourish'd and thriv'd in choisenesse of Phrase, round and cleane composition of sentence, sweet falling of the clause, varying an illustration by tropes and figures, weight of Matter, worth of Subject, soundnesse of Argument, life of Invention, and depth of Judgement. This is *Monte potiri*, to get the hill: For no perfect Discovery can bee made upon a flat or a levell.

Now that I have informed you in the knowing these things, let mee leade you by the hand a little farther, in the direction of the use, and make you an able Writer by

*De optimo scriptore.*

practice. The conceits of the mind are Pictures of things, and the tongue is the Interpreter of those Pictures. The order of Gods creatures in themselves is not only admirable and glorious, but eloquent; Then he who could apprehend the consequence of things in their truth, and 5 utter his apprehensions as truly, were the best Writer or Speaker. Therefore *Cicero* said much, when hee said, *Dicere rectè nemo potest, nisi qui prudenter intelligit.* The shame of speaking unskilfully were small if the tongue onely thereby were disgrac'd: But as the Image of a *King* 10 in his Seale ill-represented is not so much a blemish to the waxe, or the Signet that seal'd it, as to the Prince it representeth, so disordered speech is not so much injury to the lips that give it forth, as to the disproportion and incoherence of things in themselves, so negligently ex- 15 pressed. Neither can his mind be thought to be in tune, whose words doe jarre; nor his reason in frame, whose sentence is preposterous; nor his Elocution cleare and perfect, whose utterance breakes it selfe into fragments and uncertainties. Were it not a dishonour to a mighty 20 Prince, to have the Majesty of his embassage spoyled by a carelesse Ambassadors? and is it not as great an Indignity, that an excellent conceit and capacity, by the indiligence of an idle tongue, should be disgrac'd? Negligent speech doth not onely discredit the person of 25 the Speaker, but it discrediteth the opinion of his reason and judgement; it discrediteth the force and uniformity of the matter and substance. If it be so then in words, which fly and escape censure, and where one good *Phrase* begs pardon for many incongruities and faults, 30 how shall he then be thought wise whose penning is thin and shallow? How shall you looke for wit from him whose leasure and head, assisted with the examination of his eyes, yeeld you no life or sharpenesse in his writing?

*In writing* there is to be regarded the Invention and the Fashion. For the *Invention*, that ariseth upon your busines ; whereof there can bee no rules of more certainty, or precepts of better direction given, then conjecture can lay downe from the severall occasions of mens particular lives and vocations. But sometimes men make basenesse of kindnesse : As, *I could not satisfie my selfe till I had discharged my remembrance, and charged my Letters with commendations to you ; Or, My busines is no other then to testifie my love to you, and to put you in mind of my willingnesse to doe you all kind offices ; Or, Sir, have you leasure to descend to the remembring of that assurance you have long possesst in your servant, and upon your next opportunity make him happy with some commands from you ? Or the like ; that goe a begging for some meaning, and labour to be deliver'd of the great burthen of nothing.* When you have invented, and that your busines bee matter, and not bare forme or meere Ceremony, but some earnest, then are you to proceed to the ordering of it, and digesting the parts, which is had out of two circumstances. One is the understanding of the Persons to whom you are to write ; the other is the coherence of your Sentence : For mens capacity to weigh what will be apprehended with greatest attention or leisure, what next regarded and long'd for especially, and what last will leave satisfaction, and, as it were, the sweetest memoriall and beliefe of all that is past in his understanding whom you write to. For the consequence of Sentences, you must bee sure that every clause doe give the Q. one to the other, and be bespoken ere it come. So much for *Invention* and *order*. Now for *fashion* : it consists in foure things, which are Qualities of your style. The first is *Brevity* : For they must not be Treatises or Discourses (your Letters) except it be to learned men. And even among them there is a kind of thrift and saving of words. Therefore you are to examine the clearest passages of your understanding,

*De stylo  
Epistolari.  
Inventio.*

*Modus.  
1. Brevitas.*

and through them to convey the sweetest and most significant words you can devise, that you may the easier teach them the readiest way to an other mans apprehension, and open their meaning fully, roundly, and distinctly: So as the Reader may not thinke a second view cast away 5 upon your letter. And though respect bee a part following this, yet now here, and still I must remember it, if you write to a man, whose estate and cense, as senses, you are familiar with, you may the bolder (to set a taske to his braine) venter on a knot. But if to your Superior, you 10 are bound to measure him in three farther points: First, your interest in him; Secondly, his capacity in your Letters; Thirdly, his leasure to peruse them. For your interest or favour with him, you are to bee the shorter or longer, more familiar or submissee, as hee will afford you 15 time. For his capacity you are to be quicker and fuller of those reaches and glances of wit or learning, as hee is able to entertaine them. For his leasure, you are commanded to the greater briefnesse, as his place is of greater discharges and cares. But with your betters, you are not 20 to put Riddles of wit, by being too scarce of words; not to cause the trouble of making *Breviates* by writing too riotous and wastingly. *Brevity* is attained in matter by avoiding idle Complements, Prefaces, Protestations, Parentheses, superfluous circuit of figures and digressions: 25 In the composition, by omitting Conjunctions—*Not onely, But Also; Both the one and the other; whereby it commeth to passe*—and such like idle Particles, that have no great busines in a serious Letter but breaking of sentences, as often times a short journey is made long by unnecessary 30 baits.

But as *Quintilian* saith, there is a briefnesse of the parts sometimes that makes the whole long; as, I came to the staires, I tooke a paire of oares, they launch'd out, rowed a pace, I landed at the Court-gate, I paid my fayre, went 35



up to the Presence, ask'd for my Lord, I was admitted. All this is but, I went to the Court, and speake with my Lord. This is the fault of some Latine Writers, within these last hundred years, of my reading, and perhaps  
5 *Seneca* may be appeacht of it; I accuse him not. The next property of *Epistolarie* style is *Perspicuity*, and is  
2. *Perspicuitas.*  
often times (lost?) by affectation of some wit ill angled for, or ostentation of some hidden termes of Art. Few words they darken speech, and so doe too many; as well too  
10 much light hurteth the eyes as too little; and a long Bill of *Chancery* confounds the understanding as much as the shortest note. Therefore, let not your Letters be penn'd like English Statutes, and this is obtain'd. These vices are eschewed by pondering your busines well and  
15 distinctly concerning your selfe, which is much furthered by uttering your thoughts, and letting them as well come forth to the light and Judgement of your owne outward senses as to the censure of other mens eares: For that is the reason why many good Schollers speake but fumblingly;  
20 like a rich man, that for want of particular note and difference can bring you no certaine ware readily out of his shop. Hence it is that talkative, shallow men doe often content the Hearers more then the wise. But this may find a speedier redresse in writing, where all comes under the  
25 last examination of the eyes. First mind it well, then pen it, then examine it, then amend it, and you may bee in the better hope of doing reasonably well. Vnder this vertue may come Plainenesse, which is not to be curious in the order, as to answer a letter as if you were to answer to  
30 Intergatories: As to the first, first; and to the second, secondly, &c.: But both in method to use (as Ladies doe in their attyre) a diligent kind of negligence, and their sportive freedome; though with some men you are not to jest, or practise tricks: yet the delivery of the most  
35 important things may be carried with such a grace, as that

it may yeeld a pleasure to the conceit of the Reader. There must bee store, though no excesse of termes ; as, if you are to name *Store*, sometimes you may call it choyse, sometimes plenty, sometimes copiousnesse, or variety ; but ever so, that the word which comes in lieu have not such 5 difference of meaning as that it may put the sense of the first in hazard to be mistaken. You are not to cast a Ring for the perfumed termes of the time, as *Accommodation*, *Complement*, *Spirit*, &c. But use them properly in their place, as others. There followeth *Life* and 10 *Quicknesse*, which is the strength and sinnewes, as it were, of your penning by pretty Sayings, Similitudes, and Conceits, Allusions, some knowne History, or other common place, such as are in the Courtier and the second booke of *Cicero de oratore*. The last is, Respect to 15 discerne what fits your selfe, him to whom you write, and that which you handle, which is a quality fit to conclude the rest, because it doth include all. And that must proceed from ripenesse of judgement, which, as one truly saith, is gotten by foure meanes, *God*, *Nature*, 20 *Diligence*, and *Conversation*. Serve the first well, and the rest will serve you.

*De Poetica.* We have spoken sufficiently of Oratory ; let us now make a diversion to *Poetry*. *Poetry*, in the Primogeniture, had many peccant humours, and is made to have more 25 now, through the Levity and inconstancie of mens Judgements : Whereas, indeed, it is the most prevailing Eloquence, and of the most exalted *Charact*. Now the discredits and disgraces are many it hath receiv'd through mens study of Depravation or Calumny ; their practise 30 being to give it diminution of Credit, by lessening the Professors estimation, and making the Age afraid of their Liberty : And the Age is growne so tender of her fame, as she calls all writings *Aspersions*.

That is the State word, the Phrase of Court, *Placentia* 35

Colledge, which some call *Parasites Place*, the Inne of Ignorance.

Whilst I name no persons, but deride follies, why should any man confesse or betray himselfe? why doth not that  
 5 of S. Hierome come into their minde, *Vbi generalis est de vitiis disputatio, ibi nullius esse personæ injuriam*? It is such an inexpiable crime in *Poets* to taxe vices generally, and no offence in them who, by their exception, confesse they have committed them particularly. Are wee fal'ne  
 10 into those times that wee must not

*Aurículas teneras mordaci rodere vero?*

*Pers. Sat. I.  
 Livius.*

*Remedii votum semper verius erat, quàm spes.* If men may by no meanes write freely, or speake truth, but when it offends not, why doe *Physicians* cure with sharpe medi-  
 15 cines or corrosives? Is not the same equally lawfull in the cure of the minde that is in the cure of the body? Some vices, you will say, are soe foule that it is better they should bee done then spoken. But they that take offence where no Name, Character, or Signature doth blazon them, seeme  
 20 to mee like affected as woemen, who, if they heare any thing ill spoken of the ill of their Sexe, are presently mov'd, as if the contumely respected their particular; and on the contrary, when they heare good of good woemen, conclude that it belongs to them all. If I see any thing  
 25 that toucheth mee, shall I come forth a betraier of my selfe presently? No, if I be wise, i'le dissemble it; if honest, i'le avoid it, lest I publish that on my owne forehead which I saw there noted without a title. A man that is on the mending hand will either ingeniously confesse or  
 30 wisely dissemble his disease. And the wise and vertuous will never thinke any thing belongs to themselves that is written, but rejoyce that the good are warn'd not to bee such, and the ill to leave to bee such. The Person offended hath no reason to bee offended with the writer,  
 35 but with himselfe; and so to declare that properly to belong

*Sexus  
 fæmin.*

to him which was so spoken of all men, as it could bee no mans severall, but his that would willfully and desperately clayme it. It sufficeth, I know, what kinde of persons I displease, men bred in the declining and decay of vertue, betroth'd to their owne vices; that have abandoned or prostituted their good names; hungry and ambitious of infamy, invested in all deformity, enthralld to ignorance and malice, of a hidden and conceal'd malignitie, and that hold a concomitancy with all evill.

*What is a Poet?*

10

*Poeta.* A *Poet* is that which by the *Greeks* is call'd κατ' ἐξοχήν, ὁ Ποιητής, a Maker, or a fainer: His Art, an Art of imitation or faining, expressing the life of man in fit measure, numbers, and harmony, according to *Aristotle*: From the word ποιεῖν, which signifies to make or fayne. Hence hee 15 is call'd a *Poet*, not hee which writeth in measure only, but that fayneth and formeth a fable, and writes things like the Truth. For the Fable and Fiction is, as it were, the forme and Soule of any Poeticall worke or *Poeme*.

*What meane you by a Poeme?*

20

*Poema.* A *Poeme* is not alone any worke or composition of the Poets in many or few verses; but even one alone verse sometimes makes a perfect *Poeme*. As when *Aeneas* hangs up and consecrates the Armes of *Abas* with this Inscription:

*Virgilius.*  
*Aeneid.*  
*lib. 3.*

*Aeneas hæc de Danais victoribus arma,*

25

And calls it a *Poeme*, or *Carmen*. Such are those in *Martiall*:

*Martial.*  
*lib. 8.*  
*epigr. 19.*

*Omnia, Castor, emis: sic fiet, ut omnia vendas,*  
And:

*Pauper videri Cinna vult, & est pauper.*

30

So were *Horace* his *Odes* call'd *Carmina*, his *Lirik* Songs.  
And *Lucretius* designs a whole booke in his sixt :

*Quod in primo quoque carmine claret.*

And anciently all the Oracles were call'd *Carmina* ; or  
5 what ever Sentence was express'd, were it much or little,  
it was call'd an *Epick*, *Dramatick*, *Lirike*, *Elegiake*, or *Epi-*  
*grammatike Poeme.*

*Epicum,*  
*Drama-*  
*ticum,*  
*Liricum,*  
*Elegiacum,*  
*Epigrammat.*  
*Poesis.*

*But how differs a Poeme from what wee call Poesy ?*

*A Poeme*, as I have told you, is the worke of the Poet,  
10 the end and fruit of his labour and studye. *Poesy* is his  
skill or Crafte of making ; the very Fiction it selfe, the  
reason or forme of the worke. And these three voices  
differ, as the thing done, the doing, and the doer ; the  
thing fain'd, the faining, and the fainer : so the *Poeme*, the  
15 *Poesy*, and the *Poet*. Now, the *Poesy* is the habit or the  
Art ; nay, rather the Queene of Arts, which had her  
Originall from heaven, received thence from the 'Ebrewes,  
and had in prime estimation with the *Greeks*, transmitted  
to the *Latines* and all Nations that profess'd Civility.  
20 The Study of it, if wee will trust *Aristotle*, offers to man-  
kinde a certaine rule and Patterne of living well and  
happily, disposing us to all Civill offices of Society. If wee  
will beleive *Tully*, it nourisheth and instructeth our Youth,  
delights our Age, adornes our prosperity, comforts our  
25 Adversity, entertaines us at home, keepes us company  
abroad, travailes with us, watches, devides the times of our  
earnest and sports, shares in our Country recesses and  
recreations ; insomuch as the wisest and best learned have  
thought her the absolute Mistresse of manners and nearest  
30 of kin to Vertue. And wheras they entitle *Philosophy* to  
bee a rigid and austere *Poesie*, they have, on the contrary,  
stiled *Poesy* a dulcet and gentle *Philosophy*, which leades  
on and guides us by the hand to Action with a ravishing

*Artium*  
*Regina.*



Poet: difference.

Grammatica.  
Logic.  
Rhetoric.  
Ethica.

1. Ingenium.

delight and incredible Sweetnes. But before wee handle the Kindes of *Poems*, with their speciall differences, or make court to the Art it selfe as a Mistresse, I would leade you to the knowledge of our *Poet* by a perfect Information, what he is or should bee by nature, by 5 exercise, by imitation, by Studie, and so bring him downe through the disciplines of *Grammar*, *Logicke*, *Rhetoricke*, and the *Ethicks*, adding somewhat out of all, peculiar to himselfe, and worthy of your Admittance or reception. 10

*First*, wee require in our *Poet* or maker (for that Title our Language affordes him elegantly with the *Greeke*) a goodnes of naturall wit. For wheras all other Arts consist of Doctrine and Precepts, the *Poet* must bee able by nature and instinct to powre out the Treasure of his 15 minde, and as *Seneca* saith, *Aliquando secundum Anacreontem insanire jucundum esse*; by which hee understands the *Poeticall Rapture*. And according to that of *Plato*, *Frustrâ Poeticas fores sui compos pulsavit*: And of *Aristotle*, *Nullum magnum ingenium sine mixturâ dementiæ fuit. Nec* 20 *potest grande aliquid, & supra cæteros loqui, nisi mota mens*. Then it riseth higher, as by a devine Instinct, when it contemnes common and knowne conceptions. It utters somewhat above a mortall mouth. Then it gets a loft and flies away with his Ryder, whether before it was doubtfull 25 to ascend. This the *Poets* understood by their *Helicon*, *Pegasus*, or *Parnassus*; and this made *Ovid* to boast:

*Est Deus in nobis, agitante calescimus illo:  
Sedibus æthereis spiritus ille venit.*

And *Lipsius* to affirme, *Scio Poetam neminem præstantem* 30 *fuisse, sine parte quadam uberiore divinæ auræ*. An hence it is that the comming up of good *Poets* (for I minde not *mediocres* or *imos*) is so thinne and rare among us. Every beggerly Corporation affoords the State a *Major* or two *Bailiffs* yearly; but *solus Rex, aut Poeta, non quotannis* 35

Petron. in fragm.

*nascitur*. To this perfection of Nature in our *Poet* wee <sup>2. Exerci-</sup> require Exercise of those parts, and frequent. If his wit will <sup>tatio.</sup> not arrive suddainly at the dignitie of the Ancients, let him not yet fall out with it, quarrell, or be over hastily Angry, offer to turne it away from Study in a humor ; but come to it againe upon better cogitation, try an other time with labour. If then it succeed not, cast not away the Quills yet, nor scratch the Wainescott, beate not the poore Deske, but bring all to the forge and file againe ; tourne it a newe. There is no Statute *Law* of the Kingdome bids you bee a Poet against your will or the first Quarter. If it come in a yeare or two, it is well. The common Rymers powre forth Verses, such as they are, *ex tempore* ; but there never come(s) from them one Sense worth the life of a Day. A Rymer and a *Poet* are two things. It is said of the incomparable *Virgil* that he brought forth his verses like a Beare, and after form'd them with licking. *Scaliger* the Father writes it of him, that he made a quantitie of verses in the morning, which a fore night hee reduced to a lesse number. But that which *Valerius Maximus* hath left recorded of *Euripides*, the *tragicke Poet*, his answer to *Alcestis*, an other *Poet*, is as memorable as modest ; who when it was told to *Alcestis* that *Euripides* had in three daies brought forth but three verses, and those with some difficultie and throwes, *Alcestis* glorying hee could with ease have sent forth a hundred in the space, *Euripides* roundly repl(y)d : like enough ; But here is the difference : Thy verses will not last those three daies, mine will to all time. Which was as to tell him he could not write a verse. I have met many of these Rattles that made a noyse and buz'de. They had their humme, and no more. Indeed, things wrote with labour deserve to be so read, and will last their Age. The third requisite in our *Poet* or Maker is *Imitation*, to bee able to convert the substance or Riches <sup>3. Imitatio.</sup> of an other *Poet* to his owne use. To make choise of one

excellent man above the rest, and so to follow him till he grow very *Hee*, or so like him as the Copie may be mistaken for the Principall. Not as a Creature that swallowes what it takes in, crude, raw, or indigested, but that feedes with an Appetite, and hath a Stomacke to concoct, deuide, 5 and turne all into nourishment. Not to imitate servilely, as *Horace* saith, and catch at vices for vertue, but to draw forth out of the best and choisest flowers, with the Bee, and turne all into Honey, worke it into one relish and savour ; make our *Imitation* sweet ; observe how the best 10 writers have imitated, and follow them : How *Virgil* and *Statius* have imitated *Homer* ; how *Horace*, *Archilochus*, how *Alcæus* and the other *Liricks* ; and so of the rest.

4. *Lectio.* But that which wee especially require in him is an exactnesse of Studie and multiplicity of reading, which 15 maketh a full man, not alone enabling him to know the *History* or Argument of a *Poeme* and to report it, but so to master the matter and Stile, as to shew hee knowes how to handle, place, or dispose of either with *elegancie* when need shall bee : And not thinke hee can leape forth 20 suddainely a *Poet* by dreaming hee hath been in *Parnassus*, or having washt his lipps, as they say, in *Helicon*. There goes more to his making then so : For to Nature, Exercise, 25

*Ars coron.* Imitation, and Studie, *Art* must bee added to make all these perfect. And though these challenge to themselves 25 much in the making up of our Maker, it is Art only can lead him to perfection, and leave him there in possession, as planted by her hand. It is the assertion of *Tully*, If to an excellent nature there happen an accession or confirmation of Learning and Discipline, there will then 30 remaine somewhat noble and singular. For, as *Simylus* saith in *Stobæus*, Οὔτε φύσις ἱκανὴ γίνεται τέχνης ἄτερ, οὔτε πᾶν τέχνη μὴ φύσιν κεκτημένη, without Art Nature can nere bee perfect, & without Nature Art can clayme no being. But our Poet must beware that his Studie bee not only to 35

learne of himself; for hee that shall affect to doe that  
 confesseth his ever having a Foole to his master. Hee  
 must read many, but ever the best and choisest; those  
 that can teach him any thing hee must ever account his  
 5 masters, and reverence: among whom *Horace* and hee  
 that taught him, *Aristotle*, deserv'd to bee the first in  
 estimation. *Aristotle* was the first accurate *Criticke* and  
 truest Judge, nay, the greatest *Philosopher* the world ever  
 had; for hee noted the vices of all knowledges in all  
 10 creatures, and out of many mens perfections in a Science  
 hee formed still one Art. So hee taught us two Offices  
 together, how we ought to judge rightly of others, and  
 what wee ought to imitate specially in our selves: But all  
 this in vaine without a naturall wit and a Poeticall nature  
 15 in chiefe. For no man, so soone as hee knowes this or  
 reades it, shall be able to write the better; but as he is  
 adapted to it by Nature, he shall grow the perfecter  
 Writer. Hee must have *Civil prudence* and *Eloquence*,  
 & that whole, not taken up by snatches or peeces, in  
 20 Sentences or remnants, when he will handle businesse or  
 carry Counsells, as if he came then out of the Declamors  
 Gallerie, or Shadowe, but furnish'd out of the body of the  
 State, which commonly is the Schoole of men. The *Poet* *Virorum*  
 is the neerest Borderer upon the Orator, and expresseth *schola*  
 25 all his vertues, though he be tyed more to numbers, is his  
 equall in ornament, and above him in his strengths. And  
 of the kind the *Comicke* comes neerest: Because in  
 moving the minds of men, and stirring of affections, in  
 which Oratory shewes, and especially approves her emi-  
 30 nence, hee chiefly excels. What figure of a Body was  
*Lysippus* ever able to forme with his Graver, or *Apelles* to  
 paint with his Pencill, as the Comedy to life expresseth so  
 many and various affections of the minde? There shall  
 the Spectator see some insulting with Joy, others fretting  
 35 with Melancholy, raging with Anger, mad with Love,

Nævius.

boiling with Avarice, undone with Riot, tortur'd with expectation, consum'd with feare: no perturbation in common life but the Orator findes an example of it in the Scene. And then for the Elegancy of Language, read but this Inscription on the *Grave* of a *Comicke Poet*:

5

*Immortales mortales si fas esset flere,  
Flerent divæ Camænæ Nævium Poetam;  
Itaque postquam est Orcino traditus thesauro,  
Obлити sunt Romæ linguâ loqui Latinâ.*

Or that modester Testimonie given by *Lucius Aelius* 10  
*Stilo* upon *Plautus*, who affirmed, *Musas, si latinè loqui  
voluissent, Plautino sermone fuisse loquuturas*. And that  
illustrious judgement by the most learned *M. Varro* of  
him, who pronounced him the *Prince of Letters* and  
*Elegancie* in the *Roman Language*.

15

I am not of that opinion to conclude a *Poets* liberty  
within the narrowe limits of lawes which either the  
*Grammarians* or *Philosophers* prescribe. For before they  
found out those Lawes there were many excellent Poets  
that fulfill'd them: Amongst whome none more perfect 20  
then *Sophocles*, who liv'd a little before *Aristotle*.

Which of the *Greekelings* durst ever give precepts to  
*Demosthenes*? or to *Pericles*, whom the Age surnam'd  
*heavenly*, because he seem'd to thunder and lighten with  
his Language? or to *Alcibiades*, who had rather Nature for 25  
his guide then Art for his master?

But whatsoever Nature at any time dictated to the  
most happie, or long exercise to the most laborious, that  
the wisdom and Learning of *Aristotle* hath brought into  
an Art, because he understood the Causes of things; 30  
and what other men did by chance or custome he doth  
by reason; and not only found out the way not to erre,  
but the short way we should take not to erre.

Many things in *Euripides* hath *Aristophanes* wittily  
reprehended, not out of Art, but out of Truth. For 35



*Euripides* is sometimes peccant, as he is most times perfect. But Judgement when it is greatest, if reason doth not accompany it, is not ever absolute.

To judge of Poets is only the facultie of Poets; and not  
 5 of all Poets, but the best. *Nemo infœlicius de Poetis  
 judicavit, quàm qui de Poetis scripsit.* But some will say,  
*Criticks* are a kind of Tinkers, that make more faults  
 then they mend ordinarily. See their diseases and those  
 of *Grammarians*. It is true, many bodies are the worse  
 10 for the meddling with: And the multitude of *Physicians* hath  
 destroyed many sound patients with their wrong practise.  
 But the office of a true *Critick* or *Censor* is not to throw  
 by a letter any where, or damne an innocent Syllabe,  
 but lay the words together, and amend them; judge  
 15 sincerely of the Author and his matter, which is the signe  
 of solid and perfect learning in a man. Such was *Horace*,  
 an Author of much Civilitie, and, if any one among the  
 heathen can be, the best master both of vertue and  
 wisdom; an excellent and true judge upon cause and  
 20 reason, not because he thought so, but because he knew  
 so out of use and experience.

*Cato* the *Grammatician*, a defender of *Lucilius*.

*Cato Grammaticus, Latina Syren,  
 Qui solus legit, & facit Poetas.*

*Heins: de  
 Sat: 265.*

25 *Quintilian* of the same heresie, but rejected.

*Horace* his judgement of *Chærellus* defended against  
*Ioseph Scaliger*: And of *Laberius* against *Julius*.

*Pag. 267.*

*Pag. 270,  
 271.*

*Pag. 273*

*& seq.*

*Pag. in  
 comm: 153  
 & seq.*

But chiefly his opinion of *Plautus* vindicated against  
 many that are offended, and say it is a hard Censure upon  
 30 the parent of all conceipt and sharpnesse. And they wish  
 it had not fallen from so great a master and Censor in the  
 Art, whose bondmen knew better how to judge of *Plautus*  
 then any that dare patronize the family of learning in this  
 Age; who could not bee ignorant of the judgement of the

times in which hee liv'd, when *Poetrie* and the *Latin* Language were at the height; especially being a man so conversant and inwardly familiar with the censures of great men that did discourse of these things daily amongst themselves. Againe, a man so gracious and in high favour 5 with the Emperour, as *Augustus* often called him his wittie *Manling*, for the littlenes of his stature; and, if wee may trust Antiquity, had design'd him for a Secretary of Estate, and invited him to the place, which he modestly praid off and refus'd. 10

*Horace* did so highly esteeme *Terence* his Comedies, as he ascribes the Art in Comedie to him alone among the *Latines*, and joynes him with *Menander*.

Now, let us see what may be said for either, to defend *Horace* his judgement to posterity, and not wholly to 15 condemne *Plautus*.

*The parts  
of a Come-  
die and  
Tragedie.*

The parts of a Comedie are the same with a *Tragedie*, and the end is partly the same: For they both delight and teach; the *Comicks* are call'd διδάσκαλοι of the *Greekes* no lesse then the *Tragicks*. 20

Nor is the moving of laughter alwaies the end of *Comedy*; that is rather a fowling for the peoples delight, or their fooling. For, as *Aristotle* saies rightly, the moving of laughter is a fault in Comedie, a kind of turpitude that depraves some part of a mans nature 25 without a disease: As a wry face without paine moves laughter, or a deformed vizard, or a rude Clowne drest in a Ladies habit and using her actions; wee dislike and scorne such representations, which made the ancient Philosophers ever thinke laughter unfitting in a wise man. 30 And this induc'd *Plato* to esteeme of *Homer* as a sacrilegious Person, because he presented the *Gods* sometimes laughing. As also it is divinely said of *Aristotle*, that to seeme ridiculous is a part of dishonesty, and foolish.

So that what either in the words or Sense of an Author, 35

or in the language or Actions of men, is a wry or depraved doth strangely stirre meane affections, and provoke for the most part to laughter. And therefore it was cleare that all insolent and obscene speaches, jest upon the best  
 5 men, injuries to particular persons, perverse and sinister Sayings, and the rather unexpected, in the old Comedy did move laughter, especially where it did imitate any dishonesty; and scurrility came forth in the place of wit; which, who understands the nature and *Genius* of laughter  
 10 cannot but perfectly know.

*The wit of  
the old  
Comedy.*

Of which *Aristophanes* affords an ample harvest, having not only out gone *Plautus* or any other in that kinde, but express'd all the moods and figures of what is ridiculous oddly. In short, as Vinegar is not accounted  
 15 good untill the wine be corrupted, so jests that are true and naturall seldome raise laughter with the beast, the multitude. They love nothing that is right and proper. The farther it runs from reason or possibility with them the better it is.

20 What could have made them laugh, like to see *Socrates* presented, that Example of all good life, honesty, and vertue, to have him hoisted up with a Pullie, and there play the Philosopher in a basquet: Measure how many foote a Flea could skip *Geometrically*, by a just Scale, and  
 25 edifie the people from the ingine! This was *Theatricall* wit, right Stage-jesting, and relishing a Play-house, invented for scorne and laughter; whereas, if it had savour'd of equity, truth, perspicuity, and Candor, to have tasten a wise or a learned Palate, spit it out presantly! this is  
 30 bitter and profitable, this instructs, and would informe us; what neede wee know any thing, that are nobly borne, more then a Horse-race or a hunting-match, our day to breake with Citizens, and such innate mysteries?

*Theatricall  
wit.*

This is truly leaping from the Stage to the Tumbrell  
 35 againe, reducing all witt to the Originall Dungcart.

*The Cart.*

*Of the magnitude and compasse of any Fable,  
Epicke or Dramatick.*

*What the  
measure of  
a Fable is.  
The Fable  
or Plott of  
a Poeme  
defin'd.*

To the resolving of this *Question* wee must first agree in the definition of the Fable. The Fable is call'd the *Imitation* of one intire and perfect Action, whose parts 5 are so joyned and knitt together, as nothing in the structure can be chang'd or taken away without imparing or troubling the whole, of which there is a proportionable magnitude in the members. As, for example, if a man would build a house, he would first appoint a place to 10 build it in, which he would define within certaine bounds: So in the Constitution of a *Poeme*, the Action is aym'd at by the *Poet*, which answers Place in a building, and that Action hath his largenesse, compasse, and proportion. But as a Court or Kings Palace requires other dimensions 15 then a private house: So the *Epick* askes a magnitude from other Poëms: Since what is Place in the one is Action in the other; the difference is in space. So that by this definition wee conclude the fable to be the *imitation* of one perfect and intire Action, as one perfect and intire place 20 is requir'd to a building. By perfect, wee understand that to which nothing is wanting, as Place to the building that is rais'd, and Action to the fable that is form'd. It is perfect, perhaps not for a Court or Kings Palace, which requires a greater ground, but for the structure wee 25 would raise; so the space of the Action may not prove large enough for the *Epick Fable*, yet bee perfect for the *Dramatick*, and whole.

*The Epick  
fable*

*differing*

*from the  
Drama-  
ticke.*

*What wee  
understand  
by Whole.*

*Whole* wee call that, and perfect, which hath a *beginning*, a *mid'st*, and an *end*. So the place of any building may 30 be whole and intire for that worke, though too little for a palace. As to a *Tragedy* or a *Comedy*, the Action may be convenient and perfect that would not fit an *Epicke*

*Poeme* in Magnitude. So a Lion is a perfect creature in himselfe, though it bee lesse then that of a *Buffalo* or a *Rhinocerote*. They differ but in *specie*: either in the kinde is absolute. Both have their parts, and either the whole. Therefore, as in every body, so in every Action, which is the subject of a just worke, there is requir'd a certaine proportionable greatnesse, neither too vast nor too minute. For that which happens to the Eyes when wee behold a body, the same happens to the Memorie when wee contemplate an action. I looke upon a monstrous Giant, as *Tityus*, whose body cover'd nine Acres of Land, and mine eye stickes upon every part; the whole that consists of those parts will never be taken in at one intire view. So in a *Fable*, if the Action be too great, wee can never comprehend the whole together in our Imagination. Againe, if it be too little, there ariseth no pleasure out of the object; it affords the view no stay: It is beheld, and vanisheth at once. As if wee should looke upon an Ant or Pismyre, the parts fly the sight, and the whole considered is almost nothing. The same happens in Action, which is the object of Memory, as the body is of sight. Too vast oppreseth the Eyes, and exceeds the Memory; too little scarce admits either.

Now, in every Action it behooves the *Poet* to know which is his utmost bound, how farre with fitnessse and a necessary proportion he may produce and determine it: That is, till either good fortune change into the worse, or the worse into the better. For as a body without proportion cannot be goodly, no more can the Action, either in Comedy or Tragedy, without his fit bounds. And every bound, for the nature of the Subject, is esteem'd the best that is largest, till it can increase no more; so it behooves the Action in *Tragedy* or *Comedy* to be let grow till the necessity aske a Conclusion; wherein two things are to be considered: First, that it exceed not the compasse of

*What the utmost bound of a fable.*



one Day; Next, that there be place left for digression and Art. For the *Episodes* and digressions in a Fable are the same that household stuffe and other furniture are in a house. And so farre for the measure and extent of a *Fable Dramaticke*.

What by  
one, and  
intire.

Now, that it should be one and intire. One is considerable two waies; either as it is only separate, and by it self, or as being compos'd of many parts, it beginnes to be one as those parts grow or are wrought together. That it should be one the first way alone, and by it self, no man that hath tasted letters ever would say, especially having required before a just Magnitude and equall Proportion of the parts in themselves. Neither of which can possibly bee, if the Action be single and separate, not compos'd of parts, which laid together in themselves, with an equall and fitting proportion, tend to the same end; which thing out of Antiquitie it selfe hath deceiv'd many, and more this Day it doth deceive.

So many there be of old that have thought the Action of one man to be one: As of *Hercules*, *Theseus*, *Achilles*, *Ulysses*, and other *Heroes*; which is both foolish and false, since by one and the same person many things may be severally done which cannot fitly be referred or joyned to the same end: which not only the excellent *Tragick-Poets*, but the best Masters of the *Epick*, *Homer* and *Virgil*, saw. For though the Argument of an *Epick-Poeme* be farre more diffus'd & powr'd out then that of *Tragedy*, yet *Virgil*, writing of *Aeneas*, hath pretermitted many things. He neither tells how he was borne, how brought up, how he fought with *Achilles*, how he was snatch'd out of the battaile by *Venus*; but that one thing, how he came into *Italie*, he prosecutes in twelve bookes. The rest of his journey, his error by Sea, the Sacke of *Troy*, are put not as the Argument of the worke, but *Episodes* of the Argument. So *Homer* lai'd by many things of *Ulysses*, and

handled no more then he saw tended to one and the same end.

*Contrarie* to which, and foolishly, those *Poets* did, whom the *Philosopher* taxeth: Of whom one gather'd all the  
 5 Actions of *Theseus*, another put all the Labours of *Hercules* in one worke. So did he whom *Juvenal* mentions in the begining, *hoarse Codrus*, that recited a volume compil'd, which he call'd his *Theseide*, not yet finish'd, to the great trouble both of his hearers and himself: Amongst which  
 10 there were many parts had no coherence nor kindred one with other, so farre they were from being one Action, one *Fable*. For as a house, consisting of diverse materialls, becomes one structure and one dwelling, so an Action, compos'd of diverse parts, may become one *Fable*, *Epicke*  
 15 or *Dramaticke*. For example, in a *Tragedy*, looke upon *Sophocles* his *Ajax*: *Ajax*, depriv'd of *Achilles's* Armour, which he hop'd from the suffrage of the *Greekes*, disdaines, and, growing impatient of the Injurie, rageth and turnes mad. In that humour he doth many senselesse things, and  
 20 at last falls upon the *Grecian* flocke, and kills a great Ramme for *Ulysses*: Returning to his Sense, he growes asham'd of the scorne, and kills himself; and is by the *Chiefes* of the *Greekes* forbidden buriall. These things agree and hang together, not as they were done, but as  
 25 seeming to be done, which made the Action whole, intire, and absolute.

For the whole, as it consisteth of parts, so without all the parts it is not the whole; and to make it absolute is  
 requir'd not only the parts, but such parts as are true.  
 30 For a part of the whole was true, which, if you take away, you either change the whole or it is not the whole. For if it be such a part, as, being present or absent, nothing concernes the whole, it cannot be call'd a part of the whole; and such are the *Episodes*, of which hereafter. For the  
 35 present, here is one example: The single Combat of *Ajax*

*The conclusion concerning the Whole and the Parts.*

*Which are Episodes.*

with *Hector*, as it is at large describ'd in *Homer*, nothing belongs to this *Ajax* of *Sophocles*.

You admire no *Poems* but such as run like a Brewers-cart upon the stones, hobbling :

*Martial.*  
*lib. II.*  
*epigr. 90.*

*Et quæ per salebras atque saxa cadunt,*  
*Actius & quidquid Pacuviusque vomunt.*  
*Attonitusque legis, terrai frugiferai.*

5

# JOHN WEBSTER

## PREFACE TO *THE WHITE DIVEL*

1612

### TO THE READER

I N publishing this Tragedy, I do but challenge to my selfe that liberty which other men haue tane before mee: not that I affect praise by it, for *nos hæc nouimus esse nihil*; onely, since it was acted in so dull a time of Winter, presented in so open and blacke a Theater, that it wanted (that which is the onely grace and setting out of a Tragedy) a full and vnderstanding Auditory; and that, since that time, I haue noted most of the people that come to that Play-house resemble those ignorant asses, who, visiting Stationers shoppes, their vse is not to inquire for good bookes, but new bookes; I present it to the generall veiŵ with this confidence:

*Nec Ronchos metues maligniorum,  
Nec Scombris tunicas dabis molestas.*

If it be objected this is no true Drammaticke Poem, I shall easily confesse it; *non potes in nugas dicere plura meas Ipse ego quam dixi*; willingly, and not ignorantly, in this kind haue I faulted; for should a man present to such an Auditory the most sententious Tragedy that euer was written, obseruing all the critticall lawes, as heighth of stile and grauety of person, inrich it with the sententious Chorus, and, as it were, life 'n Death in the passionate and waighty *Nuntius*; yet, after all this diuine rapture, *O dura messorum ilia*, the breath that comes from the vncapable multitude is able to poison it; and ere it be acted, let the Author resolute to fix to euery scène this of *Horace*,

—*Hæc hodie Porcis comedenda relinques.*

To those who report I was a long time in finishing this Tragedy, I confesse I do not write with a goose-quill, winged with two feathers; and if they will needs make it my fault, I must answere them with that of *Eurypides* to *Alcestides*, a Tragicke Writer: *Alcestides* objecting that *Eurypides* had onely in three daies composed three verses, whereas himselfe had written three hundreth: Thou telst truth (quoth he) but heres the difference; thine shall onely bee read for three daies, whereas mine shall continue three ages. 10

Detraction is the sworne friend to ignorance. For mine owne part, I haue euer truly cherisht my good opinion of other mens worthy Labours; especially of that full and hightned stile of Maister *Chapman*: The labor'd and vnderstanding workes of Maister *Johnson*: The no lesse worthy composures of the both worthily excellent Maister *Beaumont* & Maister *Fletcher*: And lastly (without wrong last to be named) the right happy and copious industry of M. *Shake-speare*, M. *Decker*, & M. *Heywood*; wishing what I write may be read by their light: Protesting that, in the strength of mine owne iudgement, I know them so worthy, that though I rest silent in my owne worke, yet to most of theirs I dare, without flattery, fix that of *Martiall*: 15  
20

— *non norunt Hæc monumenta mori.*



# GEORGE CHAPMAN

## PREFACES TO HIS TRANSLATION OF HOMER

1610-16?

### I

#### THE PREFACE TO THE READER

OF all bookes extant in all kinds, *Homer* is the first All bookes  
of humane  
wisdom. and best: No one before his, *Iosephus* affirmes, nor before him, saith *Velleius Paterculus*, was there any whom he imitated, nor after him any that could imitate him. And  
5 that Poesie may be no cause of detraction from al the eminence we giue him, *Spondanus* (preferring it to all Arts and sciences) vnanswerably argues and proues. For to the glory of God, and the singing of his glories, no man dares deny, man was chiefly made. And what art per-  
10 formes this chiefe end of man with so much excitation and expression as Poesie,—*Moses, Dauid, Salomon, Iob, Esay, Jeremy, &c.*, chiefly vsing that to the end aboue said? And since the excellence of it cannot be obtained by the labor and art of man, as all easily confesse it, it  
15 must needs be acknowledged a diuine infusion. To proue which in a word, this distich, in my estimation, serues something nearely:

*Great Poesie, blind Homer, makes all see  
Thee capable of all Arts, none of thee;*

20 For out of him, according to our most graue and iudicial *Plutarch*, are all Arts deduced, confirmed, or illustrated. It is not therfore the worlds vilifying of it that can make it vile; for so we might argue, & blaspheme the most incomparably sacred. It is not of the world indeed, but,  
25 like *Truth*, hides it selfe from it. Nor is there any such

reality of wisdomes truth in all humane excellence as in  
 Poets fictions: That most vulgar & foolish receipt of  
 Poeticall licence being of all knowing men to be exploded  
 (accepting it as if Poets had a tale-telling priuiledge aboue  
 others),—no Artist being so strictly and inextricably con- 5  
 fined to all the lawes of learning, wisdomes, and truth as  
 a Poet. For were not his fictions composed of the sinewes  
 and soules of all those, how could they differ farre from,  
 and be combined with, eternitie? To all sciences, there-  
 fore, I must still, with our learned and ingenious *Spondanus*, 10  
 preferre it, as hauing a perpetuall commerce with the  
 diuine Maiesty, embracing and illustrating al his most  
 holy precepts, and enioying continuall discourse with his  
 thrice perfect and most comfortable spirit. And as the  
 contemplatiue life is most worthily & diuinely preferred by 15  
*Plato* to the actiue, as much as the head to the foote, the  
 eye to the hand, reason to sence, the soule to the bodie,  
 the end it selfe to all things directed to the end, quiet to  
 motion, and Eternitie to Time, so much preferre I diuine  
 Poesie to all worldly wisdomes. To the onely shadow of 20  
 whose worth, yet, I entitle not the bold rimes of euerie  
 Apish and impudent Braggart, though he dares assume  
 any thing (such I turne ouer to the weauing of Cobwebs),  
 and shall but chatter on molehills, farre vnder the hill of  
 the Muses, when their fortunat'st selfloue and ambition 25  
 hath aduanced them highest. Poesie is the flower of the  
 Sunne, & disdains to open to the eye of a candle. So  
 kings hide their treasures & counsels from the vulgar,  
*ne euilescant* (saith our *Spond.*): we haue example sacred  
 enough, that true Poesies humility, pouerty, & contempt 30  
 are badges of diuinity, not vanity. Bray then, and barke  
 against it, ye Wolf-fac't worldlings; that nothing but  
 honours, riches, and magistracie, *nescio quos turgidè spiratis*  
 (that I may vse the words of our friend still) *Qui solas*  
*leges Iustinianas crepatis: paragraphum vnum aut alterum*, 35

*pluris quàm vos ipsos facitis, &c.* I, for my part, shall euer esteeme it much more manly and sacred, in this harmelesse and pious studie, to sit till I sinke into my graue, then shine in your vainglorious bubbles and impieties,—al your  
5 poore policies, wisdomes, and their trappings at no more valuing then a musty Nut. And much lesse I wey the frontlesse detractions of some stupide ignorants, that no more knowing me then their owne beastly ends, and I euer, to my knowledge, blest from their sight, whisper  
10 behind me vilifyings of my translation; out of the *French* affirming them, when both in *French* and all other languages but his owne, our withall-skill enriched Poet is so poore and vnpleasing that no man can discerne from whence flowed his so generally giuen eminence and admiration.  
15 And therfore, by any reasonable creatures conference of my sleight comment and conuersion, it will easily appeare how I shunne them, and whether the originall be my rule or not. In which he shall easily see, I vnderstand the vnderstandings of all other interpreters and commenters  
20 in places of his most depth, importance, and rapture. In whose exposition and illustration, if I abhorre from the sence that others wrest and racke out of him, let my best detractor examine how the Greeke word warrants me. For my other fresh fry, let them fry in their foolish gals,  
25 nothing so much weighed as the barkings of puppies or foistinghounds; too vile to thinke of our sacred *Homer*, or set their prophane feete within their liues lengths of his thresholds. If I faile in something, let my full performance in other some restore me, haste spurring me on with other  
30 necessities. For as at my conclusion I protest, so here at my entrance, lesse then fiteene weekes was the time in which all the last twelue books were entirely new translated. No conference had with any one liuing in al the nouelties I presume I haue found. Only some one or two  
35 places I haue shewed to my worthy and most learned

friend, *M. Harriots*, for his censure how much mine owne weighed ; whose iudgement and knowledge in all kinds I know to be incomparable and bottomlesse ; yea, to be admired as much, as his most blameles life, and the right sacred expence of his time, is to be honoured and reuer- 5  
 enced. Which affirmation of his cleare vnmachednesse in all manner of learning I make in contempt of that nastie obiection often thrust vpon me,—that he that will iudge must know more then he of whom he iudgeth,—for so a man should know neither God nor himself. Another 10  
 right learned, honest, and entirely loued friend of mine, *M. Robert Hews*, I must needs put into my confest conference touching *Homer*, though very little more then I had with *M. Harriots*. Which two, I protest, are all, and preferred to all. Nor charge I their authorities with 15  
 any allowance of my generall labour, but onely of those one or two places, which for instances of my innouation, and how it shewed to them, I imparted. If any taxe me for too much periphrasis or circumlocution in some places, let them reade *Laurentius Valla* and *Eobanus Hessus*, 20  
 who either vse such shortnesse as cometh nothing home to *Homer*, or, where they shun that fault, are ten parts more paraphrastical then I. As, for example, one place I will trouble you, if you please, to conferre with the originall, and one interpreter for all. It is in the end 25  
 of the third booke, and is *Hellens* speech to *Venus*, fetching her to *Paris*, from seeing his cowardly combat with *Menelaus* ; part of which speech I will here cite :

οὐνεκα δὴ νῦν διὸν Ἀλέξανδρον Μενέλαος  
 νικήσας, &c.

30

For auoiding the common readers trouble here, I must referre the more *Greekish* to the rest of the speech in *Homer*, whose translation *ad verbum* by *Spondanus* I will here cite, and then pray you to conferre it with that which followeth of *Valla*.

35

*Quoniam verò nunc Alexandrum Menelaus  
Postquam vicit, vult odiosam me domum abducere,  
Propterea verò nunc dolum (ceu dolos) cogitans aduenisti?  
Sede apud ipsum vadens, deorum abnega vias,  
5 Neque vnquam tuis pedibus reuertaris in cælum,  
Sed semper circa eum ærumnas perfer, & ipsum serua  
Donec te vel uxorem faciat, vel hic seruam, &c.*

Valla thus :

*Quoniam victo Paride, Menelaus me miseram, est reporta-  
10 turus ad lares, ideo tu, ideo falsa sub imagine venisti, vt me  
deciperes ob tuam nimiam in Paridem beneuolentiam ; eò  
dum illi ades, dum illi studes, dum pro illo satagis, dum illum  
obseruas atque custodis, deorum commercium reliquisti, nec  
ad eos reuersura es ampliùs ; adeò (quantum suspicor) aut  
15 vxor eius efficeris, aut ancilla, &c.*

Wherein note if there be any such thing as most of this  
in *Homer* ; yet only to expresse (as he thinkes) *Homers*  
concept, for the more pleasure of the reader, he vseth this  
ouerplus, *dum illi ades, dum illi studes, dum pro illo satagis,*  
20 *dum illum obseruas atque custodis, deorum commercium  
reliquisti.* Which (besides his superfluitie) is vtterly false.  
For where he saith, *reliquisti deorum commercium, Hellen*  
saith, Θεῶν δ' ἀπόειπε κελεύθους, *deorum autem abnega, or  
abnue, vias, ἀπειπεῖν (vel ἀποπειπεῖν, as it is vsed poetically)*  
25 *signifying denegare or abnuere ; & Hellen (in contempt of  
her too much obseruing men) bids her renounce heauen,  
and come liue with Paris till he make her his wife or  
seruant : scoptically or scornefully speaking it : which  
both Valla, Eobanus, and all other interpreters (but these  
30 ad verbum) haue vtterly mist. And this one example  
I thought necessarie to insert here, to shew my detractors  
that they haue no reason to vilifie my circumlocution  
sometimes when their most approued Grecians, Homers  
interpreters, generally hold him fit to be so conuerted.  
35 Yet how much I differ, and with what authoritie, let my*



impartiall and iudiciall reader iudge: Alwaies conceiuing how pedanticall and absurd an affectation it is in the interpretation of any Author (much more of *Homer*) to turn him word for word, when (according to *Horace*, and other best lawgiuers to translators) it is the part of euery 5 knowing and iudiciall interpreter, not to follow the number and order of words, but the materiall things themselues, and sentences to weigh diligently, and to clothe and adorne them with words, and such a stile and forme of Oration, as are most apt for the language into which they 10 are conuerted. If I haue not turned him in any place falsly (as all other his interpreters haue in many, and most of his chiefe places), if I haue not left behind me any of his sentence, elegancie, height, intention, and inuention, if in some few places (especially in my first edition, being 15 done so long since, & following the common tract) I be something paraphrasticall & faulty, is it iustice in that poore fault (if they will needs haue it so) to drowne all the rest of my labour? But there is a certaine enuious Wind-sucker, that houers vp and downe, laboriously engrossing 20 al the aire with his luxurious ambition, and buzzing into euery eare my detraction, affirming I turne *Homer* out of the Latine onely, &c., that sets all his associates, and the whole rabble of my maligners on their wings with him, to beare about my empaire and poyson my reputation. One 25 that, as he thinkes, whatsoeuer he giues to others, he takes from himselfe; so whatsoeuer he takes from others, he addes to himselfe: One that in this kinde of robbetrie doth like *Mercurie*, that stole good and supplied it with counterfeit bad still: One like the two gluttons, *Phyloxenus* 30 and *Gnatho*, that would still emptie their noses in the dishes they loued, that no man might eate but themselues. For so this *Castrill*, with too hote a liuer: and lust after his owne glorie, and to deuoure all himselfe, discourageth all appetites to the fame of another. I haue striken, 35

single him as you can. Nor note I this to cast any rubbes  
or plasters out of the particular way of mine owne estima-  
tion with the world; for I resolute this with the wilfully  
obscure:

5 *Sine honore viuum, nulloque numero ero.*

Without mens honors I will liue, and make  
No number in the manlesse course they take.

But to discourage (if it might be) the generall detraction  
of industrious and well-meaning vertue. I know I cannot  
10 too much diminish and deiect my selfe; yet that passing  
little that I am, God onely knowes, to whose euer-implored  
respect and comfort I onely submit me. If any further  
edition of these my sillie endeours shall chance, I will  
mend what is amisse (God assisting me) and amplifie my  
15 harsh Comment to *Homers* farre more right, and mine  
owne earnest and ingenious loue of him. Notwithstanding,  
I know, the curious and enuious will neuer sit downe  
satisfied. A man may go ouer and ouer, till he come ouer  
and ouer, and his paines be onely his recompence; euey  
20 man is so loded with his particular head, and nothing  
in all respects perfect, but what is perceiued by few.  
*Homer* himselfe hath met with my fortune, in many  
maligners; and therefore may my poore-selfe put vp with  
motion. And so little I will respect malignitie, and so  
25 much encourage my selfe with mine owne knowne strength,  
and what I finde within me of comfort and confirman-  
(examining my selfe throughout with a farre more i-  
ealous and seuer eye then my greatest enemie, imitating this:

*Iudex ipse sui totum se explorat ad vnguem, &c.),*

30 That after these *Iliads*, I will (God lending me life and any  
meanest meanes) with more labour then I haue lost here,  
and all vncheckt alacritie, diue through his *Odysses*. Nor  
can I forget here (but with all heartie gratitude remember)  
my most ancient, learned, and right noble friend, *M. Richard*  
35 *Stapilton*, first most desertfull mouer in the frame of our

*Homer.* For which (and much other most ingenious and vtterly vnderuered desert) God make me amply his requiter, and be his honorable families speedy and full restorer. In the meane space, I intreate my impartiall and iudiciall Reader, that all things to the quicke he will 5 not pare: but humanely and nobly pardon defects; and if he find any thing perfect, receiue it vnuenied.

## II

## TO THE READER

*L*EST with foule hands you touch these holy Rites,  
*And with preiudicacies too prophane,*  
*Passe Homer in your other Poets sleights,* 10  
*Wash here. In this Porch to his numerous Phane,*  
*Heare ancient Oracles speake, and tell you whom*  
*You haue to censure. First then Silius heare,*  
*Who thrice was Consull in renowned Rome,*  
*Whose verse, saith Martiall, nothing shall out-weare.* 15

Silius Italicus, Lib. 13:

*H*E, in *Elysium*, hauing cast his eye  
 Vpon the figure of a Youth, whose haire,  
 With purple Ribands braided curiously,  
 Hung on his shoulders wondrous bright and faire, 20  
 Said: Virgine, What is he whose heavenly face  
 Shines past all others as the Morne the Night;  
 Whom many maruelling soules, from place to place,  
 Pursue and haunt with sounds of such delight;  
 Whose countenance (wer't not in the Stygian shade) 25  
 Would make me, questionlesse, beleue he were  
 A verie God? The learned Virgine made  
 This answer: If thou shouldst beleue it here,  
 Thou shouldst not erre; he well deseru'd to be

Esteem'd a God : nor held his so-much breast  
A little presence of the Deitie :

His verse comprisde earth, seas, starres, soules at rest :  
In song, the Muses he did equalise ;

5 In honor, *Phæbus* : he was onely soule  
Saw all things spher'd in Nature, without eyes,  
And raisde your *Troy* vp to the starrie Pole.  
Glad *Scipio*, viewing well this Prince of Ghosts,  
Said : O if Fates would giue this Poet leaue  
10 To sing the acts done by the Romane Hoasts,  
How much beyond would future times receiue  
The same facts, made by any other knowne !  
O blest *Æacides*, to haue the grace  
That out of such a mouth thou shouldst be showne  
15 To wondring Nations, as enricht the race  
Of all times future with what he did know !  
Thy vertue with his verse shall euer grow.

*Now heare an Angell sing our Poets Fame,  
Whom Fate for his diuine song gaue that name :*

20 Angelus Politianus, in Nutricia.

More liuing then in old *Demodocus*,  
*Fame* glories to waxe yong in *Homers* verse.  
And as when bright *Hyperion* holds to vs  
His golden Torch, we see the starres disperse,  
25 And euery way flie heauen ; the pallid Moone  
Euen almost vanishing before his sight :  
So with the dazling beames of *Homers* Sunne,  
All other ancient Poets lose their light ;  
Whom when *Apollo* heard, out of his starre,  
30 Singing the godlike Acts of honor'd men,  
And equalling the actuall rage of warre,  
With onely the diuine straines of his penne,  
He stood amaz'd, and freely did confesse  
Himselfe was equall'd in *Mæonides*.

*Next, heare the graue and learned Plinie vse  
His censure of our sacred Poets Muse.*

Plin. Nat. hist. lib. 7. Cap. 29.

Turnd into verse, that no Prose may come neare *Homer*.

Whom shall we choose the glorie of all wits,	5
Held through so many sorts of discipline,	
And such varietie of workes and spirits,	
But Grecian <i>Homer</i> , like whom none did shine	
For forme of worke and matter? And because	
Our proud doome of him may stand iustified	10
By noblest iudgements, and receiue applause	
In spite of enuie and illiterate pride;	
Great <i>Macedon</i> , amongst his matchlesse spoiles	
Tooke from rich <i>Persia</i> , on his Fortunes cast,	
A Casket finding, full of precious oyles,	15
Form'd all of gold, with wealthy stones enchac't,	
He tooke the oyles out, and his nearest friends	
Askt in what better guard it might be vsde :	
All giuing their conceipts, to seuerall ends,	
He answerd: His affections rather chusde	20
An vse quite opposite to all their kindes,	
And <i>Homers</i> bookes should with that guard be seru'd,	
That the most precious worke of all mens minds	
In the most precious place might be preseru'd.	
The Fount of wit was <i>Homer</i> , Learnings Syre,	25
And gaue Antiquitie her liuing fire.	

Idem, lib.  
17. cap. 5.  
Idem, lib.  
25. cap. 3.

VOLUMES of like praise I could heape on this,	
Of men more auncient and more learn'd then these ;	
But since true Vertue enough louely is	
With her owne beauties, all the suffrages	30
Of others I omit, and would more faine	
That <i>Homer</i> for himselfe should be belou'd,	



Who euerie sort of loue-worth did containe.

Which how I haue in my conuersion prou'd,  
I must confesse I hardly dare referre

To reading iudgements, since, so generally,  
5 Custome hath made euen th' ablest Agents erre  
In these translations; all so much apply

Their paines and cunnings word for word to render  
Their patient Authors, when they may as well

Make fish with fowle, Camels with Whales engender,  
10 Or their tongues speech in other mouths compell.  
For, euen as different a production

Aske Greeke and English, since as they in sounds  
And letters shunne one forme and vnison;

So haue their sense and elegancie bounds  
15 In their distinguisht natures, and require  
Onely a iudgement to make both consent

In sense and elocution; and aspire,  
As well to reach the spirit that was spent  
In his example, as with arte to pierce

20 His Grammar, and etymologie of words.

But as great Clerkes can write no English verse,  
Because (alas, great Clerks!) English affords,

Say they, no height nor copie; a rude tounge,  
Since tis their Natiue; but in Greeke or Latine

25 Their writs are rare, for thence true Poesie sprong:  
Though them (Truth knowes) they haue but skil to chat-in,  
Compar'd with that they might say in their owne;  
Since thither th' others full soule cannot make

The ample transmigration to be showne

30 In Nature-louing Poesie: So the brake

That those Translators sticke in, that affect

Their word-for-word traductions (where they lose  
The free grace of their naturall Dialect

And shame their Authors with a forced Glose)

35 I laugh to see; and yet as much abhorre

*Of Trans-  
lation, and  
the naturall  
difference  
of Dialects  
necessarily  
to be  
obscured  
in it.*

*Ironick.*

*The  
necessarie  
nearenesse  
of trans-  
lation to the  
example.*

More licence from the words then may expresse  
Their full compression, and make cleare the Author:  
From whose truth, if you thinke my feet digresse,  
Because I vse needfull Periphrases,

Reade *Valla*, *Hessus*, that in Latine Prose 5  
And Verse conuert him; read the *Messines*

That into Tuscan turns him; and the Glose  
Graue *Salel* makes in french, as he translates;

Which, for th' aforesaide reasons, all must doo;  
And see that my conuersion much abates 10

The licence they take, and more shoues him too:  
Whose right not all those great learn'd men haue done,

In some maine parts, that were his Commentars:  
But, as the illustration of the Sunne

Should be attempted by the erring starres, 15  
They fail'd to search his deepe and treasurous hart.

The cause was, since they wanted the fit key  
Of Nature in their down-right strength of Art,

*The power  
of nature  
aboue Art  
in Poesie.*

With Poesie to open Poesie:  
Which in my Poem of the mysteries 20

Reueal'd in *Homer*, I will clearely proue;  
Till whose neere birth suspend your Calumnies,  
And farre-wide imputations of selfe loue.

Tis further from me then the worst that reades,  
Professing me the worst of all that wright; 25

Yet what, in following one that brauely leades,  
The worst may show, let this prooffe hold the light.  
But grant it cleere; yet hath detraction got

My blinde side in the forme my verse puts on;  
Much like a dung-hill Mastife, that dares not 30

Assault the man he barkes at, but the stone  
He throwes at him, takes in his eager iawes,

And spoyles his teeth because they cannot spoyle.

The long verse hath by prooffe receiu'd applause  
Beyond each other number; and the foile, 35

- That squint-ey'd Enuie takes, is censur'd plaine.  
 For this long Poeme asks this length of verse,  
 Which I my selfe ingenuously maintaine  
 Too long our shorter Authors to rehearse.
- 5 And, for our tongue, that still is so empayr'd  
 By traailing linguists, I can proue it cleare,  
 That no tongue hath the Muses vtterance heyr'd  
 For verse, and that sweet Musique to the eare  
 Strooke out of rime, so naturally as this;
- 10 Our Monosyllables so kindly fall,  
 And meete, opposde in rime, as they did kisse:  
 French and Italian most immetricall,  
 Their many syllables in harsh Collision  
 Fall as they brake their necks; their bastard Rimes
- 15 Saluting as they iustl'd in transition,  
 And set our teeth on edge; nor tunes nor times  
 Kept in their falles: And, me thinkes, their long words  
 Shew in short verse as in a narrow place  
 Two opposites should meet with two-hand swords
- 20 Vnwieldily, without or vse or grace.  
 Thus hauing rid the rubs, and strow'd these flowers  
 In our thrice sacred *Homers* English way,  
 What rests to make him yet more worthy yours?  
 To cite more prayse of him were meere delay
- 25 To your glad searches, for what those men found  
 That gaue his praise, past all, so high a place;  
 Whose vertues were so many, and so cround  
 By all consents Diuine, that, not to grace  
 Or adde encrease to them, the world doth need
- 30 Another *Homer*, but euen to rehearse  
 And number them, they did so much exceed:  
 Men thought him not a man, but that his verse  
 Some meere celestiaall nature did adorne;  
 And all may well conclude it could not be,
- 35 That for the place where any man was borne,

*Our  
 English  
 language  
 aboue all  
 others for  
 Rhythmi-  
 call Poesie.*

So long and mortally, could disagree  
 So many Nations as for *Homer* striu'd,  
 Vnlesse his spurre in them had bene diuine.  
 Then end their strife, and loue him, thus reuiu'd,  
 As borne in *England*: see him ouer-shine 5  
 All other-Countrie Poets; and trust this,  
 That whose-soeuer Muse dares vse her wing  
 When his Muse flies, she will be truss't by his;  
 And showe as if a Bernacle should spring  
 Beneath an Eagle. In none since was seene 10  
 A soule so full of heauen as earth's in him.  
 O! if our moderne Poesie had beene  
 As louely as the Ladie he did lymne,  
 What barbarous worldling, groueling after gaine,  
 Could vse her louely parts with such rude hate, 15  
 As now she suffers vnder euery swaine?  
 Since then tis nought but her abuse and Fate,  
 That thus empaires her: what is this to her  
 As shee is reall, or in naturall right?  
 But since in true Religion men should erre 20  
 As much as Poesie, should th' abuse excite  
 The like contempt of her Diuinitie,  
 And that her truth, and right saint sacred Merites,  
 In most liues breed but reuerence formally,  
 What wonder is't if Poesie inherits 25  
 Much lesse obseruance, being but Agent for her,  
 And singer of her lawes, that others say?  
 Forth then, ye Mowles, sonnes of the earth, abhorre her;  
 Keepe still on in the durty vulgar way,  
 Till durt receiue your soules, to which ye vow; 30  
 And with your poison'd spirits bewitch our thrifts.  
 Ye cannot so despise vs as we you;  
 Not one of you aboue his Mowlehill lifts  
 His earthy Minde, but, as a sort of beasts,  
 Kept by their Guardians, neuer care to heare 35

- Their manly voices, but when in their fists  
 They breath wild whistles, and the beasts rude eare  
 Heares their Curses barking, then by heapes they flie,  
 Headlong together ; So men, beastly giuen,  
 5 The manly soules voice, sacred Poesie,  
 Whose Hymnes the Angels euer sing in heauen,  
 Contemne, and heare not ; but when brutish noises  
 For Gaine, Lust, Honour, in litigious Prose  
 Are bellow'd-out, and cracke the barbarous voices  
 10 Of Turkish *Stentors*, O ! ye leane to those,  
 Like itching Horse to blockes or high May-poles ;  
 And breake nought but the wind of wealth ; wealth, All  
 In all your Documents ; your Asinine soules,  
 Proud of their burthens, feele not how they gall.  
 15 But as an Asse, that in a field of weeds  
 Affects a thistle, and falles fiercely to it,  
 That pricks and gals him, yet he feeds, and bleeds,  
 Forbeares a while, and licks, but cannot woo it  
 To leaue the sharpnes ; when, to wreake his smart,  
 20 He beates it with his foote, then backward kickes,  
 Because the Thistle gald his forward part ;  
 Nor leaues till all be eate, for all the prickes ;  
 Then falles to others with as hote a strife ;  
 And in that honourable warre doth waste  
 25 The tall heate of his stomacke, and his life ;  
 So, in this world of weeds, you worldlings taste  
 Your most-lou'd dainties ; with such warre buy peace ;  
 Hunger for torment, vertue kicke for vice ;  
 Cares for your states do with your states increase,  
 30 And though ye dreame ye feast in Paradise,  
 Yet Reasons Day-light shewes ye at your meate  
 Asses at Thistles, bleeding as ye eate.



# EDMUND BOLTON

*HYPERCRITICA, OR A RULE OF JUDGMENT FOR  
WRITING OR READING OUR HISTORY'S*

1618?

The chief Points or Summs of the Addresses.

## I.

CONCERNING the Historical Use of the old Book of  
BRUTE, dedicated to ROBERT Earl of GLOCESTER,  
Brother of the Empress MAWD.

5

## II.

The religious Necessity of Impartiality in Historio-  
graphers, and of Abstinence, in general, from Censure.

## III.

The Historical States of Times among us, from JULIUS 10  
CÆSAR till King HENRY the Seventh, with Discovery's of  
our chief Historical Dangers.

## IV.

Prime Gardens for gathering English: according to  
the true Gage or Standard of the Tongue, about 15 or 15  
16 years ago.

## Hypercritica :

or

A Rule of Judgement, for writing or  
reading our History's.

## ADDRESSE THE FIRST.

TO write the History of *England* is a Work superfluous,  
if it ever had an History : but, having had all other  
Honours, it only wanteth that. *Polydor Virgil* in *Eng-*  
*land*, and *Paulus Æmilius* in *France*, both of them *Italians*,  
5 were entertain'd of Purpose. As if their Narrations ought  
to have most Belief, which were written by their Pens,  
who had least Interest in the Argument, or Relation to  
the Party's. This Counsel, whatsoever it seem'd to the  
Givers or Receivers, found less in Success among us  
10 then it had in Probability. Many great Volumes carry  
among us the Titles of History's. But Learned men,  
and <sup>1</sup>*Sr Henry Savil* one of them, absolutely deny that  
any of ours discharge that Office which the Titles promise.  
For my part I think that the most of them have their  
15 Praises, and all of them their Uses towards the compo-  
sition of an universal History for *England*.

## Sect. II.

Among the greatest wants in our ancient Authours are  
the wants of Art and Style, which, as they add to the  
lustre of the Works and Delights of the Reader, yet add  
20 they nothing to the Truth ; which they so esteemed, as  
they seem to have regarded nothing else. For without  
Truth, Art and Style come into the Nature of Crimes  
by Imposture. It is an act of high Wisdom, and not of

<sup>1</sup> The place is set down in my third Adresse.

Eloquence only, to write the History of so great and noble a People as the *English*. For the Causes of things are not only wonderfully wrapt one within the other, but placed oftentimes far above the ordinary Reach's of human Wit; and he who relates Events without their Premises and Circumstances deserves not the name of an Historian, as being like to him who numbers the Bones of a Man anatomized, or presenteth unto us the Bare Skeleton, without declaring the Nature of the Fabrick or teaching the Use of Parts. 10

### Sect. III.

The Part of heavenly Providence in the Actions of Men is generally left out by most of the Ethnicks in their Histories. Among whom copious *Livy* seems worthily the most religious, and consequently of theirs the best: as *Cornelius Tacitus* (let not plain Dealing 15 offend his other Admirers) either the most irreligious, or with the most, and therefore the less worthy to be in Honour as a Cabinet Counsellour with any man to whom Piety towards powers divine is pretious.<sup>1</sup> This some affirm deliberately: notwithstanding all that which *Bocca-* 20 *lini* in his late *Lucianical Ragualias* hath undertaken on his Behalf; as in their *Anti-Tacitus*, for Justification of those censures of levity, malice, and most apparent falsehood, which *Tertullian*, *Orosius*, and other of the ancient, *Casaubon* and other of the modern, brand upon him, is 25 (as they conceive) fully proved. On the other side Christian Authors, while for their ease they shuffled up the reasons of events, in briefly referring all causes immediately to the Will of God, have generally neglected

<sup>1</sup> Epist. ad *Hen. 4tum*, *Gall. Reg. ante Polybium*: illos excusari non posse judicamus, qui unicum hunc historicum omnibus aliis anteponunt. Quid enim principi, præsertim juveni, lectione illorum Annalium esse queat perniciosius?

to inform their Readers in the ordinary means of Carriage in human Affairs, and thereby singularly maimed their Narrations. *Philip de Comines* and our *Sr Thomas More* (both of them great Counsellours of State to their several  
 5 Princes) are two of those very few Worthies, who, respecting as well the superior as the inferior Efficients of Operations in the World, come near to accomplish the most difficult duty of Historians. In which number as I wish to be one, so there is no fault to endeavour to be  
 10 the only one; for, according to that of *Quinctilian*: *Quid erat futurum, si nemo plus fecisset eo quem sequebatur?*

## Sect. IV.

Truth is the soveraigne praise of an History. For want whereof *Lucian* did condemn unto his hell *Ctesias*, *Herodotus*, and other of his Country men. And although  
 15 himself were as false a Companion as any, yet Learning and Reason told him that Truth in Story was only to be sacrificed unto, as the Goddess of that brave Province, and that all other respects came after, with a very large distance between. Which makes *Velleius Paterculus*, that  
 20 courtly Historian, with his *bis penetrata Britannia* in flattery of *Cæsar*, rather to live for his Latin, and conceitful notions, then for his authority in matter; and *Ammianus Marcellinus*, notwithstanding his half barbarous style, to have a better and a greater Fame then polite  
 25 *Paterculus*.

## Sect. V.

There is a great complaint among some of the most Learned, against *Galfridus Arthurius*, or *Galfridus Monumethensis*, for want of Truth and Modesty, as creating a BRUTE unto us for the Founder of our *Britain*. But  
 30 who is he that, proving it to be a Fiction, can prove it withal to be his? If that Work be quite abolished,

there is a vast Blanck upon the Times of our Country, from the Creation of the World till the coming of *Julius Cæsar*, not *terra incognita* it self being less to be known then ours. The Things of which Ages as we understand not the more for *Monmouths* history, 5 unless the same be true, so neither seem they (as being those Times which our Criticks mark with their \**Ἀδελον* and their *Μυθικόν*, their *Ignotum* and *Fabulosum*) much to be stood upon. Nevertheless out of that very Story (let it be what it will) have Titles been framed in open 10 Parliament, both in <sup>1</sup> *England* and <sup>2</sup> *Ireland*, for the Rights of the Crown of *England*, even to entire Kingdoms. And though no Parliament can make that to be a Truth which is not such in the proper Nature thereof, nor that much Authority is added thereby to that traditional Monument, 15 because Parliament men are not always Antiquaries, yet are we somewhat the more, and rather ty'd to look with favour on the Case. Therefore it pleased me well, what once I did read in a great Divine, that in *Apocryphis non omnia esse Apocrypha*. And that very much of *Monmouths* 20 book, or pretended Translation *de Origine & gestis Britannorum* be granted to be fabulous, yet many Truths are mixed.

## Sect. VI.

The main Controversy concerning that Work is whether it be an Antiquity or an Imposture. That it is full of Fables 25 or Discohærencies no man denyeth, and *Giraldus Cambrensis* himself, though being his Country-man and living in that Age,<sup>3</sup> angerly taxeth it for such, albeit he grants

<sup>1</sup> Apud *Matth. Westm.* Epist. *Edv.* i. Regis *A.* ad *Bonifacium* P. M. 1301. Et Epist. Procerum *Angl.* Anno eodem.

<sup>2</sup> II. *Elizab.* ap. *Dubl.* 23 Febru. *Sr H. Sidney, L. Deputy.*

<sup>3</sup> Sicut fabulosa *Gaufredi Arthuri* mentitur Historia: These are the words of *Giraldus* cited by *Sr John Prise*, out of *Giraldus, de Cambriæ descriptione*, where *Giraldus* denies, and truly denies,



a *Brute*, and much of the principal Substance to be true, and follows it. The Adversaries are both many, and many of special Account, as *Nubrigensis*, *Whethamsted*, &c. among the ancient; and among the modern (whom also  
 5 *Camden* citeth) *Vives*, *Junius*, *Buchanan*, *Polidor*, *Bodin*, &c., but all of them Strangers. On the other side, friends alledge *Malmesburie* (the worthiest Writer of all our Historians) for the being of *Arthur*, *Huntingdon*, *Aluredus*, *Hoveden*, *Cestrensis*, *Gervasius Tilburiensis*, &c. among our  
 10 older Authors, and of the later times the Muster of Names is not thinn: *Leland* most famous, *Sr John Prise*, Knight, *Humfrey Lhuid*, &c., Men singularly skill'd in our Antiquities, and *Britanns* of Race, Doctor *Keyes*, Founder of *Keyes College* in *Cambridge*, Mr *Lambert* of *Lincolns*  
 15 Inn (who for freeing *Monmouth* from the suspicion of Forgery<sup>1</sup> voucheth his Possession of a Welsh Copie, older, in his opinion, then *Monmouth's* Translation), Doctor *Powel*, Mr *Lewis*, and all Welsh Bards and Genealogist's, Doctor *White* of *Basingstoke* in his Latin Histories, *Stowe*, *Holins-*  
 20 *head*, &c. So that if the cause were to be try'd or carry'd by Voices, the affirmative would have the fuller Cry. And by that which *Monmouth* himself <writes> in his Epistle dedicatory to that learned, brave, and warlike Prince, *Robert*, Earl of *Glocester*, natural son to K. *Henry* the first,  
 25 concerning the style of the *Welsh* original, by him translated (and perhaps interpolated), wherein abounded *phalerata verba* and *ampullosæ dictiones*, pompous Words (as he saith) and swelling phrases, it seems nothing else but a meer Satyra, Rhapsodie, or Cento, peiced together out of their  
 30 Bards Songs or Ballads, which may well be so. For *Ammianus Marcellinus* writes that it was the Office of the *Britain* Bards, *Fortia facta virorum illustrium heroicis* that *Wales* was so called either of Duke *Wallo* or of Queen *Wendolena*.

<sup>1</sup> Perambulat. of *Kent*.

*composita versibus, cum dulcibus Lyræ modulis cantitare*; and *Lucan*, long before his daies, hath recorded the same.

### Sect. VII.

Our Historians Office concerning the Use of such a Book as this of *Monmouths*, for Defence whereof not only a great party of learned Writers stand, but an whole noble Nation 5 (anciently Lords of this Island), hath not an easy Description. Certainly much is attributed, and much is to be attributed, in this Case, unto domestick Monuments, how barbarous soever, specially touching the Originals of People. For *Myrsilus* of *Lesbos* is said to own this Sentence, that in 10 Searches of such nature, *Magis creditur ipsi genti atque vicinis, quam remotis & exteris*. Which had no *Myrsilus* ever said, yet had it not been the less true, or the more needing Authority, because it is meerly a Dictate of common Sense, and all principal Authors allow thereof. *Salust* 15 himself made use of King *Hiempsal* his Library, in the *Carthaginian* or *Punick* Tongue (which was a kind of *Syriac* shewing their Original to be from *Tyre* and other Towns in *Phœnicia*) to write his *Jugurtha* the more exactly. What shall we say of *Polydor Virgil's* way in this very 20 matter? though he utterly misliked *Monmouths* Narrations as fabulous, yet did he breif them into his Volumes with special Protestation by name against a little book of like Argument, passing for *Gildas* the Historiographer's. *Sigebertus Gemblacensis*, living in *Monmouth's* time, where his 25 Chronicle tenders the Occasion, saith of that story thus: *Nec dubia pro veris affirmamus, nec Historicam narrationem, quæ nuper de Britannico sermone in Latinum translata est, lectori subtrahimus*. And this course carries the show of Justice and Reason. Nevertheless each may do as himself 30 thinks best, though that perhaps be not best. For *Salust* in the like case reports what he finds, but taking nothing therein upon himself, plainly tells us that *fides ejus rei*

*penes authores erit.* Tacitus also (his Admirer, and next him to be admired for his Art) when he hath simply set down what he had heard concerning the *Germans* first Ancestry (a Tale of a Father and his three Sons, as that 5 is in *Monmouth* of *Brute* and his three Sons), concludeth : *Quæ neque confirmare argumentis, neque refellere in animo est.* Let, therefore, our Historian look well about him, and examine whether this proceeding do not properly concern his Duty. Sure I am that if *Cornelius Tacitus* had holden 10 the Course of every where following the ancient Histories, or historical Traditions of Countries, he had not in the *Jews* Antiquities been so ridiculous, idle, and injurious, as he is in the fifth Book, a Fragment of his Histories.

## Sect. VIII.

However, it is the least Care, or among the least Care 15 of famous old Historians, who are the only Examples of History, to spend much time in the Learning or Etymologies of Nations or Countries Names. For as S.<sup>1</sup> *Augustine* saith, they are many times so changed, *temporis vetustate, ut vix homines doctissimi antiquissimas* 20 *historias perscrutantes, origines potuerunt reperire*; and S.<sup>2</sup> *Hierom* (of all the Latin Fathers the most learned) hath words to like Purpose, where he speaks of such Nations as descended out of *Joctan*. And be it that the Names are never so well to be known, yet what is it to the 25 purpose of an History (the glass of Actions) to understand the Reason (or Conjectures rather) why or how *Britain* was called *Britain*, *Rome*, *Rome*, or *Troy*, *Troy*? Certainly to perplex in this case our Reader with long disputes or long Rehearsals of Names and their Etymologies, with 30 which some late Antiquaries have cloy'd and pester'd us, falls into that rule which <sup>3</sup> *Ammianus* hath upon the like

<sup>1</sup> De Civitate Dei liber 16. cap. 11.<sup>2</sup> De Trad. Hebr. in Genes.<sup>3</sup> Histor. lib. 15. cap. 23.

occasion, where he reciteth divers Opinions concerning the Originals of the ancient *Galls*. Therefore with him I say for that Point, *declinanda varietas sæpe satietati conjuncta*. If any thing be clear in such a Case, or vehemently probable, it is both enough, and all which the Dignity of an 5 Historian's office doth permit, briefly to mention the same. As for the cause of the name of *Britain*, only two Conjectures, among so many which have of late been brought, seem worth the remembring: the one is *Camdens*, who derives it out of the word *Brith*, which signify'd (as he 10 saith) in the ancient tongue of *Britain*,<sup>1</sup> that Herb with which the *Britanns* are reported to have painted and decolour'd their Bodies. Which his Conjecture he upholds with singular Diligence, and great variety of learned Probability's. The other Opinion, or rather historical 15 Affirmation, is that *Britain* was denominated of a man, as also the herb *Britannica*. <sup>2</sup> *Pliny's* words are: *miror nominis causam.—Fuit quidem & hic quondam ambitus, NOMINIBUS SUIS eas adoptandi, quod docebimus fecisse REGES, ut res tanta iis debeatur, herbam invenire, vitam juvare.* 20 By which words it is plain that *Pliny* thinks there was some KING or other whose name had *Brit* therein, and that the herb *Britannica* was perhaps consecrated by him, to the Preservation of his Name and Memory to all Posterities. But *Monmouth* and his Followers directly 25 draw us *Britain* out of *Brutus*, who according to their narration was great Grandchild to *Æneas*, Father of *Ascanius*, Father of *Silvius*, Father of *Brutus*. This derivation of our Island's Name is wonderously esteem'd by the *Welsh*, now long since incorporated with us. 30

Therefore it behoves our Historian to be well advised,

<sup>1</sup> *Correct*: for Mr *Camden* saith not that it was the Herb, but the very being painted, smear'd, or colour'd (with an herb) which the word *Brith* signify'd.

<sup>2</sup> *Nat. Hist. lib. 25. cap. 3.*

before he enter into any Kind of unkind Diligence against the same. For if in some Cases *communis error facit jus*, error certainly in such Cases as this, as it bindeth no man, so neither is it singular to *Britain*, because the Licence  
 5 of deriving Nations from supposed Gods and Puissant Worthy's is universal. *Arrianus* and other Authors testify that *Alexander* the Great said he found it available in his actions, *quod Ammonis filius habitus sit, cum certo teneret se filium Philippi*; which are *Alexander's* words in *Lucian*.  
 10 *Varro* also (as he is cited by *St Augustin*) professeth, *Utile esse civitatibus, ut se viri fortes, etiamsi falsum sit, ex Diis genitos esse credant, ut eo modo animus humanus, velut divinæ stirpis fiduciam gerens, res magnas præsumat audacius, agat vehementius, & ob hoc impleat ipsa securitate*  
 15 *felicius*. This Sentence, notwithstanding, deliver'd by *Marcus Varro* (the most learned Man which ever *Rome* heathen had), stands specially condemned by that holy Bishop, as setting open a wide Gate to Falsehood and Abusion. Now therefore if *Jeffery* of *Monmouth's* Work  
 20 be concluded on all Hands for untrue, the noble Historian must prefer verity before politick Respects, but because it is not (as the World sees) he may remember the Temper of *Gemblacensis*, and of the other Authors cited above in this Address. For my Part, as I say with *Camben*, in *hac*  
 25 *re suum cuique liberum esto per me iudicium*, so nevertheless I incline very strongly to have so much of every Historical Monument or Historical Tradition maintain'd, as may well be holden without open absurdity. My Histories notwithstanding begin at *Julius Cæsar*.

#### ADDRESSE THE SECOND.

##### Sect. I.

30 **I**NDIFFERENCY and even dealing are the Glory of Historians. Which Rule venerable *Beda* reputed so sacred and inviolable, that albeit he much detested the



Opinion of *Aidanus*, the *Scot*, according to which he celebrated the high feasts of *Easter* otherwise than that Church did whereof *Beda* was a Member within exact Obedience ; nevertheless he durst not, as an Historian, but with all Candour and Freedom possible deliver *Aidan's* Praises. 5  
 Yea, he makes Profession that he did not only detest him as a Quartodeciman, tho' he were not a Judaizing Quarto-  
 deciman (for that he kept Easter in honour of Christ's Resurrection upon the next Sunday after the <sup>1</sup> fourteenth Moon, and not indifferently upon the next day of the 10 Week, what day soever it was), but he did also write of Purpose against *Aidan's* opinion therein, as himself professeth, citing *Aidan's* own Books. *Beda* nevertheless, coming by the Order and Necessity of his Task to memorise the Truth of Things, his closing Words, full of Saintly 15 Gravity and sincere Conscience, are : *scripsi hæc de persona & operibus viri præfati, nequaquam in eo laudans, haud eligens hoc quod de observatione Paschæ minus perfecte sapiebat, &c., sed quasi VERAX historicus simpliciter ea quæ de illo, sive per illum sunt gesta describens, & quæ laude sunt* 20 *digna in ejus actibus laudans, &c.* According to which Rule he doth sincerely discharge his Duty, commending *Aidan* not only for Learning and Eloquence (which are common as well to the good as bad) but for his Charity, Peacefulness, Continenence, Humility, for a Mind *iræ* & 25 *avaritiæ victorem*, which neither Wrath nor Covetousness could overcome, and for many other Qualities characterical and proper to a most worthy Man, and finally (which is a Principal point of Equanimity) he doth diligently extenuate and allay the ill conceit which might be conceived against 30 *Aidan* for his Doctrine and Practice in that Article ; but doth not in no sort extenuate his Praises, concluding them with one of the fullest that perhaps we shall find of any Saint in the World, which is, that he omitted nothing *ex*

<sup>1</sup> Decimamquartam lunæ diem.

*omnibus quæ in Evangelicis sive Apostolicis sive Propheticiis libris facienda cognoverat, sed cuncta pro suis viribus explere curabat.*

## Sect. II.

This admirable Justice and Integrity of Historians, as  
 5 necessary as it is, yet is nothing in these Days farther of  
 from Hope. For all late Authors that ever yet I could  
 read among us convey with them, to Narrations of things  
 done fifteen or sixteen hundred years past, the Jealousies,  
 Passions, and Affections of their own Time. Our Historians  
 10 must therefore avoid this dangerous Syren, alluring us to  
 follow our own Prejudices, unless he mean only to serve  
 a Side and not to serve Truth and Honesty, and so to  
 remain but in price while his Party is able to bear him out  
 with all his Faults, for quarrels sake. He is simply there-  
 15 fore to set forth, without Prejudices, Depravations, or  
 sinister items, things as they are. They who do otherwise,  
*ob id ipsum, quia non rogati sententiam ferunt, valde suspecti sunt.* The reason of which speech Monsieur *Bodin* (whose  
 also it is) giveth to be: for that an History ought to be  
 20 nothing else but an Image of truth, and as it were a Table  
 of Things done, permitting the Judgment of all to the  
 competent Reader, which Judgment we ought not forstall,  
 howsoever in some rare Cases it may be lawful to lead the  
 same.

## Sect. III.

25 This steel Rule whosoever honestly follows may perhaps  
 write incommodiously for some momentany Purposes, but  
 shall thereby, both in present and to posterity, live with  
 Honour, through the Justice of his Monuments. And if  
 for them he should suffer Death, as<sup>1</sup> brave *Cremutius*  
 30 *Cordus* did, yet other Historians shall eternise his Suffer-  
 ings, and that Princes great Disgrace, under whom that

<sup>1</sup> Cor. Tacit. Annal.

Tragedy was committed. Nor in so sacred a business as the putting into Books, for immortal Remembrance, the Acts of famous Men, need I fear to call it a canonical and inviolable Aphorism of Historiography, because it is absurd in the historical Volumes of holy Scripture, whose majesty 5 no *Attick* nor *Tullian* Eloquence can express, nor to whose Entireness of Verity any human Wit or Diligence can come near. For in those Divine Records, Facts, whether good or bad, and their Circumstances, are simply and clearly related, without (for the more part) any Manner of 10 Censure or Judgement upon the Facts, as in the Writers person. On the contrary, let those other Writings which abound in the different Humour be stript by Readers who have Discretion into the bare Matter which they profess to handle, so that all their Authors, Commentations, 15 Conjectures, Notes, Passions, and Censures, which they utter as in their proper Persons be diligently mark'd, abstracted, and laid apart; and then the Things which they write may be received without Danger, or certainly with little. For the Judgements of interested Authors are 20 commonly not Judgments so much as prejudices and Preventions, *ne quid suæ partes detrimenti capiant*. Iniquities practis'd in this Point are not more ordinary than odious, and are sometime laid on so impudently thick, that with less than half an Eye the Paintings are discernable : 25 otherwhile the more cunningly, yet so as that with a little Attention they may readily be discover'd. Nor have the Translators of History any more privilege than their Authors; whether therefore they corrupt the Original by the familiar Courses of Corruption, as Addition, Mu- 30 tation, Mutilation, Subtraction, Distraction, or otherwise, as they generally do, who in the Phrase of their own Education, Sect, Faction, or Affection utter Antiquities and Truths of another Tenour, it is a like worthy of Blame. Neither are Impostures and Frauds in Sentences 35

only, but in Words also, as both *Vincentius Lyrinensis* and the Apostle noteth. Such seems to me this genuating Vanity in the Chronological Table at the End of *Marcellinus* translated into English: *Hyginus*, Minister and Pastour  
 5 of the Church of *Rome*, suffered Martyrdom for Christ's Gospel. A strange Periphrasis and style for a Pope, other Titles than Minister and Pastour (though they are proper in Respect of Function) belonging to his Calling, As Patriarch and Archbishop; those by a new singularity  
 10 grown after a sort peculiar to puritanical Superintendents, Enemies of Ecclesiastical Episcopality.

## Sect. IV.

And why should any of these Dealings or Devices be at all? For who compelleth to write? and if we write why should we deceive? or if we would not deceive, why do  
 15 we not use proper and received Terms? even lying *Lucian* himself gives it for a Precept to his Historian that he should call a FIGG a FIGG. What other Effect can the Ignobility of all the formerly taxed Courses produce, then in a short Time (as they already have for the most part) to  
 20 bring the Dignity of Writing unto nothing? and who is he that rightly weighs an Historians Duty, and can dare to profane or embase the same without Remorse or Confusion? Every Man is free to hold his Hand off from Paper; but if one will needs write, then the Nobility of the office  
 25 commands him rather to die then with the Injury of Truth to humour Times and Readers, and content himself. *Quid enim fortius desideret anima* (saith *St Augustine*) *quam veritatem?*

## Sect. V.

An Historiographers Office therefore abhorreth all sorts  
 30 of Abuse and Deceit, as Impiety or Sacrilege; and so our Writer must, if he will live indeed, and live with love and Glory.

## ADDRESSE THE THIRD.

## Sect. I.

SIR *Henry Savil*, in an Epistle Dedicatory to <sup>1</sup> Q. Elizabeth, speaking of the History of *England*, after he hath therein condemned *Polydor Vergill*, writeth thus: *Nostri ex fœce plebis Historici, dum majestatem tanti operis ornare studuerunt, putidissimis ineptiis contaminarunt. Ita 5 factum est, nescio qua hujusce insulæ infelicitate, ut Majores Tui (Serenissima Regina) viri maximi, qui magnam hujus orbis partem imperio complexi, omnes sui temporis reges rerum gestarum gloria facile superarunt, magnorum ingeniorum quasi lumine destituti, jaceant ignoti atque de-* <sup>10</sup> *litescant, &c.* Our Historians (saith the Knight) being of the Dregs of the common People, while they have endeavour'd to adorn the Majesty of so great a Work, have stain'd and defiled it with most fusty Foolery's. Whereby tho' I wot not by what hard Fortune of this Island it is <sup>15</sup> come to pass that your Ancestors (most gracious Queen), most puissant Princes, who, embracing a great part of this our World within their Empire, did easily overgo all the Kings of their Times in the Glory of great Atchievements, now destitute of as it were the Light of brave Wits, do lye <sup>20</sup> unknown and unregarded. These Words, utter'd by a Gentleman excellently learn'd to a Sovereign Queen excellently understanding, and in Print before a great Volume, are worthy to be exquisitely ponder'd, the summ whereof is the common wish: THAT THE MAJESTY OF <sup>25</sup> HANDLING OUR HISTORY MIGHT ONCE EQUAL THE MAJESTY OF THE ARGUMENT.

## Sect. II.

Great *Savil* himself gave hope, when this Epistle came abroad, that he would be the Man; and all the learned of

<sup>1</sup> Ante suos rerum Anglicarum scriptores.



*England* were arrected and full of Expectation, grieving to find it vain. Somewhat he is said to have attempted in that Argument, and made Searches in the Tower for Furniture out of Records; but, if he did any such thing,  
 5 whether impatient of the harsh and dusty Rudeness of the Subject, or despairing that he could so truly as the Honour and Splendour of his Name and as the Nature of the Work requir'd, or for what other Cause else soever, he desisted, converting all his Cares to the Edition of St  
 10 *Chrysostom* in Greek; which with the Charge of ten thousand Pounds (so it hath been said) as well in procuring Manuscripts and Transcripts, as in the printing, and otherwise, was at the last effected; thus was he carry'd away by Speculation of things Divine, as it were in  
 15 a Chariot of Fire, from this other immortal Office to his native Country. Nor do I wonder at it, for unless the Charity or Ambition of writing be extraordinary, it is otherwise an Affliction for those Minds which have been conversant in the Marvels and Delights of *Hebrew, Greek,*  
 20 and *Roman* Antiquities, to turn over so many musty Rolls, so many dry, bloodless Chronicles and so many dull and heavy paced Histories, as they must who will obtain the Crown and triumphal Ensign of having compos'd a CORPUS RERUM ANGLICARUM. But unlearned Delicacy (the minion  
 25 of the fine and fortunate) is good in great things for nothing, while it self by only doing nothing, yet censuring all Things, preserves itself from receiving Justice. Solid  
 1 *Camden* saith as the thing is: *Historia omnium ætatum authores & ferat & desideret: & ab aliis rerum, ab aliis*  
 30 *verborum doctrina sit quærenda.*

## Sect. III.

The vast vulgar Tomes procured for the most part by the husbandry of Printers, and not by appointment of the

<sup>1</sup> *Annal. Hiber. in sua Brit. pag. 836.*

Prince or Authority of the Common-weal, in their tumultuary and centonical Writings do seem to resemble some huge disproportionable Temple, whose Architect was not his Arts Master, but in which store of rich Marble, and many most goodly Statues, Columns, Arks, and <sup>5</sup> antique Peices, recover'd from out of innumerable Ruins, are here and there in greater Number then commendable order erected, with no Dispraise to their Excellency, however they were not happy in the Restorer. In Mr *Speed's* Stories publish'd since that Knights Epistle, <sup>10</sup> besides all common Helps, there are for the later times the Collections, Notes, and Extracts out of the Compositions of <sup>1</sup> L<sup>d</sup> Vicount St *Alban*, Of the <sup>2</sup> L<sup>d</sup> *Carew*, of Sr <sup>3</sup> *Rob. Cotton*, of <sup>4</sup> Sr *Hen. Spel.*, of <sup>5</sup> Doctor *Bar.*, of <sup>6</sup> Mr *Edmund B.*, &c. *Speeds* own Part is such therein for style <sup>15</sup> and Industry, that for one who (as *Martial* speaks) hath neither a *Græcum Xaίpe* nor an *Ave Latinum*, is perhaps without many Fellows in Europe. So much also have I understood of him by sure Information, that he had no Meaning in that labour to prevent great practick Learned- <sup>20</sup> ness, but to furnish it for the common Service of *England's* Glory.

## Sect. IV.

History in general hath as many Praises as any Muse among the nine. One tells us, as from out of ancient Authors, that History is nothing else but <sup>7</sup> a kind of <sup>25</sup> Philosophy using Examples; another, that History is the Metropolis of Philosophy. Plainly, and more to our Purpose, *Tully*, among other Titles, calls her the Light of Truth, and Mistress of Life. St *Gregory* <sup>8</sup> *Nazianzen* (that excellent *greek* Father) styleth her a World of <sup>30</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In *Hen.* 7.      <sup>2</sup> In *Henry* throughout 5.      <sup>3</sup> In *Henry* 8.

<sup>4</sup> In *Norfolk* 7.      <sup>5</sup> In *K. John*.

<sup>6</sup> In *K. Henry* 2. the speech of *Macmurgh*, K. of *Leinster*.

<sup>7</sup> *Isa. Casaub.*      <sup>8</sup> Ad *Nicob.* de Hist. le.

Wisdom, for so his *quædam conglobata sapientia* (as his Translator calls it) may be Englished. Our <sup>1</sup> *Malmesbury* saith well and worthily, that it is *jucunda quædam gestorū notitia mores condiens, quæ ad Bona sequenda, vel mala*  
 5 *cavenda, legentes exemplis irritat.* To like purpose writes Venerable *Beda* <sup>2</sup> to K. *Ceolulph.* Excellent is that of Sr *Thomas North*, in his Preface to his *Plutarch's Lives: Histories* (saith he there) *are fit for every place, serve for all Times, reach to all Persons, teach the living, revive the dead,*  
 10 *so excelling all other Books as it is better to see Learning in noble Mens Lives than to read it in Philosophers Writings.*

## Sect. V.

What Grammatical Criticks (from whose Pens let no man greatly hope for any thing in History noble) do teach unto us, it is not mainly by any free Master to be regarded.  
 15 For who did ever write well, simply as a Disciple of theirs? Because to make an Historian there are also requisite certain Gifts of God and Nature, ripen'd and perfected by Experience, peculiar to that Duty which *Lucian* himself placeth not within Purchase, as natural Wisdom and  
 20 Eloquence. And *Lucians* Precepts or Observations are the best for Historiography among all the Heathen, unless perhaps you will prefer *Dionysius Halicarnassæus*, where he, in a special Tract, compares *Thucydides* and *Salust.* A principle Duty of an Historian, every where agreed  
 25 upon, is to handle the Counsels and causes of Affairs. Causes again are twofold: consider'd, according to <sup>3</sup> *Savil*, as they are in Composition (wherein he saith that *Tacitus* did not look so well about him) and as they are in Division; or as <sup>4</sup> Sr *Francis Bacon*, Vicount St Alban,  
 30 doth far better for my Capacity distinguish them into

<sup>1</sup> Proœm. lib. 2. de gest. Reg. Anglor.    <sup>2</sup> Epist. dedic. Histor.

<sup>3</sup> Annot. 14. in Cap. 2. lib. 1. Histor. transla.

<sup>4</sup> Essay the 16. Cap. of Atheism.

Causes second or scatter'd, and into Causes confederate and knit together. In this point consisteth the principle Difficulty and mystery of Historical Office, and not only Difficulty and Mystery, but Felicity also, according to that of the Poet : *Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas.* 5

## Sect. VI.

The  
Roman  
Period.

To come to particulars or Parts of our History. The ROMAN PERIOD, or reign in *Britain*, containing from *Julius Cæsar* (who first invaded it) to the Reign of *Valentinian* (who first lost it) the long Space of above four hundred and threescore Years, by reason of the presence of some 10 *Roman* Emperor's, and of continuing Dealings with that incomparable People, may well be reputed the-as-it-were-purple and Gold of Histories. Which notwithstanding is rather the Glory of the *Romans* then of the *Britains*, whose Estate and Affairs are so obscure, or rather so 15 quite forgotten, that but only for one *Juvenal* we never had heard of *Arviragus*; nor but for one Venerable *Bede* and *Freculphus Lexoviensis* (unless the *Roman* Martyrologe be more ancient, for *Tertullian* names him not, tho' he toucheth at the Conversion in his *Apologeticks*) 20 we had scarce ever had any competent Testimony of King *Lucius*, first Christian King of *Britain*. The chief Difficulty, Knot, and Masterpeice of this Period is to bring to light the Acts and Commonweal of the *Britains* under the *Roman* Empire. 25

## Sect. VII.

The  
British  
Period.

The BRITAIN PERIOD, or Comprehension of Time and Matter from the Entrance of *Hengist* with his *English-Saxons*, as Friends, till the time of *Cadwalladar*, last King of the *Britains*, is Troubled with the like Obscurity as the *Roman Period*. Within this Revolution of Ages begins 30 the Labyrinth of the *Saxon* Heptarchy, or rather

Ogdoarchy, dividing the Kingdoms of the *North-Humbers* into their two Kingdoms, *Deira* and *Bernice*: which, after *Fabian*, that memorable Alderman of *London*, *Stowe*, and others, *Speed* hath done so well, as with me it deserves to  
 5 be reputed his best peice. This Period, embracing the English Period. Circle of about six hundred and sixty years, from *Hengist* to the *Norman* Invasion, hath many Excellencies in the Persons and Acts of our Ancestors, whether we consider Piety, force of Arms, or Arts of Peace. For in this time  
 10 the Foundations and Superedifications of Christian Policy of *England* were fully lay'd. And these, so far as they concern the Laws of our Land (being the same which in common Speech we call the *Common Laws of England*, but are indeed none other then *JUS CIVILE ANGLORUM*) are  
 15 very weakly and negligently handled by all our vulgar Chroniclers, tho' a thing in it self most worthy to have been throughly describ'd, and for the doing of which there are good store of Monuments. The eccentric Danish Period. circle of the *Danish* Invasions, Spoils, and Tyrannies,  
 20 being rather an Interruption of a Continuation then a just Revolution in Empire, drawn by the compasses of time within this *English-Saxon* Circumference, hath in it very terrible Examples of God's anger. Which Visitations from above, tho' grievous to Flesh and Blood, were not  
 25 without special Mercy towards both Nations, when the *English-Saxon* was thereby forc'd to better his Life, and the *Danes* (as if that were God's secret in it) by degrees obtain'd to be Christians, their Period determining in that great and holy Monarch, King *Canutus*.

## Sect. VIII.

30 The great large Space of Time containing the compass of about five hundred and fifty Years, between the *Norman* Conquest under K. *William* till the Union under K. *James*, needs not be called by any other title then that of the



The  
English  
Revolu-  
tion.

*English Revolution.* For albeit the natural English Line of the Royal *Ethelings* (as *Malmesbury* sirnameth them) was thrust out by the *Norman*, and conveyed it self into *Scotland*, in the person of St *Margaret* (from whom our King is come), though the House of *Bloys* gave us an 5 Intruder in K. *Stephen*, and the House of *Anjou* by *Matildis* the Empress, Daughter of *Beauclerck*, furnish'd us with Kings, till the Line of the *Britains* return'd in the person of *Richmond*, yet did the *Norman* name in *England* quickly pass into that of *English*, as the less into 10 the more, and all those Transmutations, Concussions, and Superinductions were of Family's or of Housen Royal, rather than of Nations. For neither the *Normans*, after a while, nor the *French* under *Lewis* the *Dolphin*, during the Barons Wars, nor the *Poictovines* under K. *Henry* the 15 third, nor the *Welch* under the *Tydders* (who in three Descents have given us five Monarchs) did either so sway, or were ever able so to sway, but that the *English* still carry'd the general Opinion, Face, and Body of the Nation, and whatsoever was done noble by any of these Sovereigns 20 or under them, the whole resulted to none other Peoples Glory then to only ours.

#### Sect. IX.

So then the ENGLISH REVOLUTION from the Conquest to K. *James*, or the Comprehension of Acts and Ages within that Space, hath inclusively given unto us 24 Princes, good 25 and bad, and is the most important Part of our Histories. For the penning whereof, whether it be best to do it by Distinction into several Actions, without intermixture of coincident Matter, or by Lives and Reigns of Princes, that is, by the Order of Times and Sequences of Events, 30 may worthily seem questionable: because the first way is absolutely best for presenting to the Mind the whole State of every particular great Business, tho' the other is best

for Narration, as that in which the natural Method of the doing is observed according to the Time of the doing, with the Intermixture synchronical, or contemporany accidents. The former Sort or Kind <sup>1</sup> *Cicero* calleth  
 5 *Perpetua & continentia scripta, & conjuncte contexta*, and the other he seems periphrastically to name *separata, sejuncta*, and *secreta à continentibus scriptis*.

## Sect. X.

To pen our History by Actions is to describe some eminently main Affair. For example, The *Norman Conquest*,  
 10 and the effects of that Tyranny till the Common-weal freed it self; the Interposal of K. *Stephen*: the famous Controversies about Church-mens Privileges between the King and *Canterbury*: which were in a manner original and fundamental to all the incredible Changes which have  
 15 followed in the Rule and Policy of our Country: The enterprise of the Cross by *Cordelion*; the Wars of the Barons; the Umpireship of *Long-shanks* in the manifold Competition for the Crown of *Scotland*; the Minions of *Carnarvon*; the Victories of *Windsore* and of the black  
 20 Prince, his incomparable Son; the Minions of *Bourdeaux*; the Intrusion of *Lancaster* (seed of the Civil Wars) and Yolking of *Wales*; the Victories of *Monmouth*; the Tutors of gentle *Henry*, and the Civil Wars of *England*; the imprudent Marriage of *March*; the Destruction of his Son;  
 25 the Atchievement of the Crown by *Glocester*; *Richmond's* Troubles by Counterfeits, and so forth. The other Way of penning our History by Races, Lives, and Reigns is the common Way, and therefore the more conform to common Liking,—which is an orderly and distinct Explication of  
 30 principal Matters as they happen'd under those several Monarchs, containing five Lines of royal Successions, whereof the *Norman* in two descents brought forth 4 Kings,

<sup>1</sup> Epist. 12. ad Luceium Historicum lib. 5.

the 2 *Williams*, *Henry*, and *Stephen*: The *Anjouvine* or *Plantagenists* Line, first in 7 Descents 8 Kings, 2 *Henrys*, 2 *Richards*, 1 *John*, and 3 *Edwards*; then again the *Plantagenists* of *Lancaster* in 3 descents 3 Kings, all of them *Henrys*: and lastly, the *Plantagenists* of *York*, in 2 descents 5 3 Kings, 2 *Edwards*, and one *Richard*: in all, of the *Plantagenists* only 14 Monarchs, 5 *Henrys*, 3 *Richards*, one *John*, and 5 *Edwards*: *Tidders* Line in 4 descents, 6 Monarchs inclusively, 2 *Henrys*, the rest severally named *Edward*, *Mary*, *Elizabeth*, and *James*, and he the first who 10 brought the Royal Sirname of *Stuarts* to the Sovereignty of *England*. But by what Point soever of the Historical Compass our Historian means to make his course through the great Sea and Archipelago of so noble and magnificent a Work, let him learn of me to know the Places of Danger, 15 Syrts, Shallows, and Rocks of most Mischief, at which all late Writers do grate either little or much, and never come of without Damage in Reputation.

## Sect. XI.

## I.

The Places where the most universal Shipwracks are made are those huge moveable Sands, which lye uncertainly 20 throughout the main Ocean of our Affairs, and almost under every Cape and Point of them, whether ancient or modern, are certain seeming Opportunities to Advantage or Disadvantage <to> this or that side in the present Professions of Religion: Their name is PREJUDICES IN 25 FAITH.

## II.

Another terrible Danger are Rocks, alike generally spread in their Tops, but rising all out of one Root, or Bottom-peice, is the Greatness of the ancient Clergy, their Power and Privileges, and may well be commonly called 30 LAPIS SCANDALI.

## III.

A third no less dreadful Peril is the narrow Channel, which now and then shifting it self, as the Sands about remove, doth notwithstanding evermore lye between that *Scylla* of the Peoples Liberty and the *Charibdis* of Royal Prerogative; which, being in some parts thereof invisible, and in other illimitable, brings present Destruction, if fallen into, and is entitled POINTS OF STATE. This makes *George Buchanans* Histories intolerable, while to the injury of Majesty and Truth he advanceth popular Licence  
 10 as mischievously as immoderately.

## IV.

A fourth Place is somewhat dangerous by Reason of the Encounter of divers Tides, and by Reason of the Checks and Currents. These are the old Titles and Claims, extant in our sincerest ancient Histories, made on behalf  
 15 of the Crown of *England* to the Crowns of other Kingdoms, and lye just under the highest Elevation of the Pole of Majesty among us, and may be term'd the HONOUR OF NATIONS. This makes the reign of *Longshancks* dangerous to write and difficult to read, without Inclination to Partakings where the Kings Carriage of the *Scotish* Affairs is  
 20 by either Nation historify'd.

## V.

The fifth are certain stormy and gusty Seas, and as it were of an other *la Bermuda*, where the fierce Winds blow as if Heaven and Earth would go together, *Tanta est*  
 25 *discordia Fratrum*. These are a kind of *Caspian*, or inland Lakes or Meres, situated in those Passages of our Histories, where there is a Necessity to sail thro' the National Quarrels of *Britain*, which the *Vnion* wisheth should be forgotten, but that the Adamantine Laws and  
 30 Nature of the Task permits it not, and may be called the QUARREL OF NATIONS. And these Winds and Tempests

are the Reason why the mutual Victories and Overthrows between *English* and *Scots*, and between *English* and *Welch*, and between *English* and *Irish*, &c., are never related with sufficient Freedom or Sincerity by newest Historians.

5

## Sect. XII.

At all these Places it is incredible to behold how many have let their Credits split in Peices, other their whole Fraights, and innumerable their Masts, Tackle, Oars, and Sails, and other Fragments, Testimonies of their Mis-carryings. Through all which nothing but the Pilotage of Truth, directed by God's Honour, and the Glory of *England*, and Magnanimities Steerage, either ever did or ever shall conduct any Authour with immortal commendation. It is withal to be observ'd also, that in Navigating this mighty Sea, it is a duty to God and our Country, that History should be true; whereas the mischief or danger of delivering truths entirely is only personal, and as contingent, so but oblique and lateral to the Writer, whose single Peril ought not to præponderate an universal Service. And albeit *Vopiscus*, in his *Aurelianus*, writes thus of his own most excellent *Roman* Authours: *Neminem scriptorum quantum ad historiam pertinet, Non aliquid esse mentitum; prodente etiam, in quo Livius, in quo Salustius, in quo Cornel. Tacitus, in quo Trogus, MANIFESTIS TESTIBUS convincerentur*: Yet as *Sr Henry Savil* (in the before said famous Epistle) pronounceth of those old Historians of *England*, *Malmsbury*, *Huntingdon*, *Hoveden*, and the other, that howsoever rude and homely for Style, yet that they were *fidi rerum interpretes*; and *Cambden* affirms of Venerable *Bede*, that he was *veri amantissimus*; so shall the reader find this true, that the old civil Historians of our Country are brightest in that essential Quality, and not to be convinced of any apparent, much less of any wilful Falsehood.

25

30



## ADDRESSE THE FOURTH.

## Sect. I.

AS for Language and Style, the Coat and Apparel of matter, he who would pen our Affairs in *English*, and compose unto us an entire Body of them, ought to have a singular Care thereof. For our Tongue (tho' it have no  
 5 noted Dialects, nor accentual Notes, as the *Greeks*, nor any received or enacted certainty of Grammar or Orthography) is very copious, and few there be who have the best and most proper Graces thereof. In which the rule cannot but be variable, because the peoples Judgements are un-  
 10 certain. The Books also out of which we gather the most warrantable *English* are not many to my remembrance. The principal which I have seen, and can in present call to mind, either for Prose or Verse, are these whose Names do follow.

## Sect. II.

15 The Histories written by Sr *Thomas More* (some few Antiquated Words excepted) contain a clear and proper Phrase.

The *Arcadia* of Sr *Philip Sidney* is most famous for rich Conceit and Splendour of Courtly Expressions, warily  
 20 to be used by an Historian, whose style should have gloss and lustre, but otherwise rather Solidity and Fluency then Singularly of Oratorial or Poetical Notions. Such things as I have read of Q. *Elizabeths* own doing carry in them a most Princely and vital Character, not without  
 25 singular Energy and Force of sought Elegancy, which makes me consent in a sort to the Praise even of those things which I have not seen of hers, set forth by Sr *Henry Savil* in these Words of his dedicatory Epistle before translated *Tacitus*: *The Cause that I publish'd it*  
 30 *under your Majesty's Name and Protection (besides the Testification of my bounded duty) was, &c., principally to incite*

*your Majesty by this, as by a Foil, to communicate to the World, if not those Admirable Compositions of your own, yet at the least those most rare and excellent Translations of Histories (if I may call them Translations, which have so infinitely exceeded the Originals), making evident Demonstration* 5  
*to all who have seen them, that as the great actions of Princes are the Subject of Storys, so Storys compos'd or amended by Princes are not only the best Pattern and rule of great actions, but also the most natural Registers thereof, the Writers being Persons of like Degree and proportionable* 10  
*Conceits with the Doers.* Somewhat it may detract from the Credit of this seeming hyperbolical Praise, both because it was written in her Life time, and also to her self. But I can believe that they were excellent. For perhaps the World never saw a Lady in whose Person more Great- 15  
 ness of Parts met, then in hers ; unless it were in that most noble Princess and Heroine, *Mary, Queen of Scots*, inferior to her only in her outward Fortunes, in all other Respects and Abilities at least her equal. A Princely, grave, and flourishing Peice of natural and exquisite 20  
*English* is Card. *Alans* Apology said to be ; and many have commended the Style and Phrase of *Father Rob. Pearsons* highly. The End of *Nero* and beginning of *Galba*, prefix'd to the translated Histories of *Tacitus*, and thought to be *Sr Henry Savil's own* (as whose else should 25  
 so rare a piece be ?) is the work of a very great Master indeed, both in our Tongue and in that Story. That Tractate which goeth under the name of the Earl of *Essex* his Apology was thought by some to be Mr <sup>1</sup> *Anthony Bacon's* ; but as it bears that E. name, so do I also think 30  
 that it was the Earl's own, as also his Advices for Travel to *Roger Earl of Rutland*, then which nothing almost can be more honourably utter'd, nor more to the Writer's

<sup>1</sup> 'Twas *Sr Francis Bacon* that wrote the *Apology* ; but that is another thing.

Praise, so far as belongs to a noble *English* Oratour. Mr *Hookers* Preface to his Books of Ecclesiastical Policy is a singular and choice Parcel of our vulgar Language. Dr *Hayward's* Phrase and Words are very good, only  
 5 some have wish'd that in his *Henry* the 4th he had not called Sr *Hugh Linn* by so light a Word as *Madcap*, tho' he were such, and that he had not changed his Historical State into a Dramatical, where he induceth a Mother uttering a Womans Passion in the Case of her Son.  
 10 Sr *Walter Raleigh's Guiana*, and his prefatory Epistle before his mighty Undertaking in the History of the World, are full of proper, clear, and Courtly graces of Speech. Most of all Sr *Francis Bacons* Writings, which have the freshest and most savoury form and aptest utter-  
 15 ances that (as I suppose) our Tongue can bear.

These, next to his Majesties own most Royal Style, are King James. the principal Prose Writers, whom out of my present Memory I dare commend for the best Garden-plots out of which to gather *English* Language.

## Sect. III.

20 In verse there are *Ed. Spencer's* Hymns. I cannot advise Spencer. the allowance of other his Poems, as for practick *English*, no more than I can do *Jeff. Chaucer, Lydgate, Peirce Ploughman*, or *Laureat Skelton*. It was laid as a fault to the charge of *Salust*, that he used some old outworn Words,  
 25 stoln out of *Cato* his Books *de Originibus*. And for an Historian in our Tongue to affect the like out of those our Poets would be accounted a foul Oversight. That therefore must not be, unless perhaps we cite the Words of some old Monument, as *Livy* cites *Carmen Martium*,  
 30 or as other Latins might alledge *Pacuvius, Andronicus*, or *Laws of the Twelve Tables*, or what else soever of the ancients. My judgment is nothing at all in Poems or Poesie, and therefore I dare not go far, but will simply deliver my Mind con-

cerning those Authours among us, whose *English* hath in my Conceit most propriety, and is nearest to the Phrase of Court, and to the Speech used among the noble and among the better sort in *London*, the two sovereign Seats and, as it were, Parliament tribunals to try the question in. Brave 5

Chapman's  
Homer.

language are *Chapman's* Iliads, those I mean which are translated into Tessara-decasyllabons, or lines of fourteen Syllables. The Works of *Sam. Daniel* contain'd somewhat aflat, but yet withal a very pure and copious *English*, and words as warrantable as any Mans, and fitter perhaps 10 for Prose than Measure. *Michael Draiton's* Heroical Epistles are well worth the reading also, for the Purpose of our Subject, which is to furnish an *English* Historian with Choice and Copy of Tongue. Q. *Elizabeth's* verses, those which I have seen and read, some exstant in the 15 elegant, witty, and artificial Book of the *Art of English Poetry*, the Work (as the Fame is) of one of her Gentlemen Pensioners, *Puttenham*, are Princely as her Prose.

Q. Eliz.

Never must be forgotten *St Peter's Complaint*, and those 20 Southwell. other serious Poems said to be father *Southwell's*; the *English* whereof, as it is most proper, so the sharpness and Light of Wit is very rare in them.

H. Constable.

Noble *Henry Constable* was a great Master in *English* Tongue, nor had any Gentleman of our Nation a more pure, quick, or higher Delivery of Conceit; witness, among 25 all other, that Sonnet of his before his Majesty's *Lepanto*. I have not seen much of *Sr Edward Dyers* Poetry. Among the lesser late Poets, *George Gascoign's* Works may be endur'd. But the best of those Times (if *Albion's England* be not preferr'd) for our business is *The Mirrour* 30 of *Magistrates*, and in that Mirrour *Sackvil's* Induction, the work of *Thomas*, afterward Earl of *Dorset* and Lord Treasurer of *England*, whose also the famous Tragedy of *Gorboduc* was the best of that time, even in *Sr Phil. Sidney's* Judgment; and all skilful *English* men cannot 35

Tho.  
Sackvil.

but ascribe as much thereto for his Phrase and Eloquence therein. But before in Age, if not also in Noble, Courtly, and Lustrous *English*, is that of the Songs and Sonnets of *Henry Howard*, Earl of *Surrey* (Son of that victorious Prince, Hen. Howard. 5 the Duke of *Norfolk*, and Father of that learned *Howard*, his most lively image, *Henry* Earl of *Northampton*) written chiefly by him and by *Sr Tho. Wiat*, not the dangerous Tho. Wiat. Commotioner but his worthy Father. Nevertheless they who most commend those Poems and exercises of honour-  
 10 able Wit, if they have seen that incomparable Earl of *Surrey* his *English* Translation of *Virgil's* *Æneids*, which for a book or two he admirably rendreth almost Line for Line, will bear me witness that those other were Foils and Sportives.

15 The *English* Poems of *Sr Walter Raleigh*, of *John Donne*, of *Hugh Holland*, but especially of *Sr Foulk Grevile* Foulk-Grevile. in his matchless *Mustapha*, are not easily to be mended. I dare not presume to speak of his Majesty's Exercises in this Heroick Kind: Because I see them all left out  
 20 in that Edition which *Montague*, Lord Bishop of *Winchester*, hath given us of his royal Writings. But if I should declare mine own Rudeness rudely, I should then confess that I never tasted *English* more to my liking, nor more smart, and put to the height of Use in Poetry, then in that  
 25 vital, judicious, and most practicable Language of *Benjamin Jonson's* Poems. Ben. Jonson.

## Sect. IV.

I hope now that no man will be so captious or ungentle as to make it a matter of quarrel to me, if I have left out any other for Want of Memory or Knowledge; or if in  
 30 those of whom herein I have made mention, I have spoken either other or otherwise then as they themselves would. Because it is enough that I dissembled not; and for that the Subject to the Purpose whereof I bring this tumultuary



Catalogue, and private free Opinion upon it, is rather *Parergon* then the thing it self I write of. For though it be Honour and Necessity that the Body of Man be clothed, yet that it should be clothed in this or that Stuff, or in stuff of this or that Fashion, is a point indifferent 5 and arbitrary, at the Writers Pleasure, so as Truth be under. And this is the present case of clothing the Body of History in the Garment of *English* Idiom.

## Sect. V.

He who would compose a CORPUS RERUM ANGLICARUM, a general History of *England* in Latin, hath no other 10 Rules to follow, but such as he who writes it in English. One thing nevertheless is primely needful by our Latin Historiographer to be consulted of and determined, because I have observed much Perplexity rising out of the right or erroneous Practice thereof. The difficulty there- 15 fore is what to do in our Latin History with Names of Persons, Things, or Places, which are not filed down to the Smoothness of Latin Sounds or Rules of Termination. *Lucian* notes a ridiculous Curiosity in one Historian, who, affecting Attick Elegancy, would needs fashion Latin 20 names to the Greek Garb, either by Translation, by Allusion, or Transportation of letters. By Translation, as in calling *Saturninus*, *Chronius*; by Allusion, as in calling *Fronto*, *Frontis*; by Metathesis, or Transportation of Syllables or Letters, in calling *Titianus*, *Titanius*. In 25 this fine and meer schoolish Folly, after that, *George Buchanan* is often taken, not without casting his Reader into obscurity. For in his Histories, where he speaketh of one *Wisehart*, so little was his ear able to brook the Name, as that translating the Sense thereof into Greek, 30 of *Wisehart* comes forth unto us SOPHOCARDIUS; and *Wisehart*, whose Name it was intended should live, was

quite lost, or must be sought for out in Lexicons. The better Care of that polite and eloquent *Scot* had been of Truth and Loyalty. All our ancient Historians *ad unum* (for oughts I can remember) follow the plain Prolation  
 5 and Truth of proper Names, and so doth the most approved and learned Philologer and Antiquary of our Nation, Mr *Cambden*.

## Sect. VI.

*Thuanus*, the most eloquent Latin Historian of this Age, and others do often call places especially by the  
 10 Names by which they were known to the *Romans* anciently and among themselves: Which troubleth the Reader, and makes work for an *Index Topographicus*. The *Romans* themselves use their own Privilege in declining and new moulding of local or personal Appellations. There are in  
 15 this Case only two sure ways for a Writer: The first to set down Names just as they find them, without regard to Latinity. (For that is most Latinlike, or *latinissimum*, which is most true,—Latin also, as other Tongues, being capable of all sorts of Words, declinable or indeclinable;  
 20 and in this way would I my self precisely insist.) The second best counsel for a Latin Historian of *English* Affairs is to use Latin Analogy of proper Names in the Text, and to set the vulgar and barbarously sounding Names in the Margin, or to post them over into a  
 25 Repertory or Table at the End of the Volume. Other Courses, besides that they savour of Affectation, do also involve the Reader with Obscurity, and afflicting him in seeking what and whence and whose a Name was, while the matter it self doth in the mean space either vanish in  
 30 the Readers Mind or altogether languish.

## Sect. VII.

God Almighty, I hope, hath now graciously brought me to the Conclusion of this high and Hypercritical Argument, which to his Glory I close up with this final admonition to my self, or to whosoever else doth meditate the Herculean and truly noble Labour of composing an entire and <sup>5</sup> compleat Body of *English* affairs, a CORPUS RERUM ANGLICARUM, a general History of *England*, to which not only the exquisite Knowledge of our own matters is altogether necessary, but of all other our Neighbours whatsoever, yea of all the World, for where our Arms <sup>10</sup> and Armies have not been, our Arts and Navies have. Know therefore, whosoever art in Love with Glory for good and Heroick Deserts, that in writing an History thou bearest a fourfold person, and in regard of that Em-  
personation thou standest charged with a fourfold Duty. <sup>15</sup>

1. As a Christian Cosmopolite, to discover God's Assistances, Disappointments, and Overruling in human affairs, as he is sensibly conversant in the Actions of men ; to establish the just Fear of his celestial Majesty against Atheists and Voluptuaries, for the general good of <sup>20</sup> Mankind and the World.

2. As a Christian Patriot, to disclose the Causes and Authours of thy Countries good or evil, to establish thereby the lawful Liberty of Nations.

3. As a Christian Subject, to observe to thy Reader the <sup>25</sup> benefit of Obedience and Damage of Rebellions ; to establish thereby the regular Authority of Monarchs and Peoples Safety.

4. As a Christian *Paterfamilias*, so to order thy Studys, that thou neglect not thy private, because the publick hath <sup>30</sup> few real Friends ; and Labours of this noble Nature are fitter to get Renown then Riches, which they will need, not amplyfy.

## Sect. VIII.

Of such Writings thou needest not fain with *Dio*, the Consul of *Rome*, any promise in Vision, that thy Name and Praise shall be immortal by means of them. For they will outlast the Nations themselves, whose Acts in  
5 competent Style they memorize. And of such Works the late Earl of *Essex* under the letters *A. B.* (for Fames gives it him) in an Epistle before the translated *Tacitus* of his Friend Sr *Henry Savil*, it is as probably pronounced for true, as if an Oracle had utter'd it: *That there is no*  
10 *treasure so much enriches the mind of Man as Learning; there is no Learning so proper for the Direction of the Life of Man as History; there is no History so well worth reading (I say not with him) as Tacitus, but as that of thine whosoever.*

DEO GLORIA ET HONOR.

HENRY PEACHAM  
FROM *THE COMPLEAT GENTLEMAN*

1622

CHAP. 10.

*Of Poetrie*

TO sweeten your seuerer studies, by this time vouchsafe Poetry your respect, which howsoever censured and seemeth fallen from the highest Stage of Honour to the lowest staire of disgrace, let not your iudgement be infected with that pestilent ayre of the common breath; to 5 be an infidell in whose beleefe, and doer of their contrary Actions, is to be religious in the right, and to merit, if it were possible, by good workes.

The Poet, as that Laurell *Maia* dreamed of, is made by miracle from his mothers wombe, and like the Diamond 10 onely polished and pointed of himselfe, disdaining the file and midwifery of forraine helpe.

Hence *Tullie* was long ere he could be deliuered of a few verses, and those poore ones too; and *Ovid*, so backward in prose that he could almost speake nothing 15 but verse. And Experience daily affordeth vs many excellent yong and growing wits, as well from Plow as the Pallace, endued naturally with this Diuine and heauenly guift, yet not knowing (if you should aske the question) whether a *Metaphore* be flesh or fish. 20

If bare saying Poetrie is an heauenly gift be too weake a proppe to vphold her credite with those buzzardly poore ones, *who hauing their feathers moulted can creepe no farther then their owne puddle*, able onely to enuie this Imperiall Eagle for sight and flight, let them, if they can, looke 25 backe to all antiquitie, and they shall finde all learning by

*Plato in  
Phædro.*



diuine instinct to breathe from her bosome, as both *Plato* θεία καὶ ὁρμή, in Parmenide. and *Tullie* in his *Tusculanes* affirme.

*Strabo* saith Poetrie was the first Philosophie that euer was taught; nor were there euer any writers thereof  
 5 knowne before *Musæus*, *Hesiod*, and *Homer*, by whose authoritie *Plato*, *Aristotle*, and *Galen* determine their weightiest controuersies, and confirme their reasons in Philosophie. And what were the songs of *Linus*, *Orpheus*, *Amphion*, *Olympus*, and that dittie *Iôpas* sang to his harpe  
 10 at *Dido's* banquet, but Naturall and Morall Philosophie, sweetened with the pleasaunce of Numbers, that Rudenesse and Barbarisme might the better taste and digest the lessons of ciuilitie? according to *Lucretius*, Italianized by *Ariosto*, and englished by Sir *John Harrington* :

15 *Sed veluti pueris absynthia tetra medentes*  
*Cum dare conantur, prius oras pocula circum*  
*Contingunt mellis dulci flavoque liquore,*  
*Vt puerorum ætas improvida ludificetur, &c.*

As Leaches, when for children they appoint  
 20 Their bitter worme-wood potions, first the cup  
 About the brimme with honnie sweete they noint,  
 That so the childe beguild may drinke it vp, &c.

Neither hath humane knowledge beene the onely subiect of this Diuine Art, but euen the highest Mysteries of  
 25 Diuinitie. What are the Psalmes of *Dauid* (which *S. Hillarie* so aptly compareth to a bunch of keies, in regard of the seuerall doores, whereby they giue the soule entrance  
 either to Prayer, Reioycing, Repentance, Thanksgiuing, &c.) but a Diuine Poeme, going sometime in one measure,  
 30 sometime in another? What liuely descriptions are there of the Maiestie of God, the estate and securitie of Gods children, the miserable condition of the wicked! What  
 liuely similitudes & comparisons, as the righteous man to a baie tree, the Soule to a thirstie Hart, vnitie to oyntment  
 35 and the dew of *Hermon*! What excellent Allegories, as

*Hil. in Prologo Psalmi.*

*Psal. 80.  
 Psal. 90.  
 Psal. 1.  
 Psalm. 104.*

the vine planted in *Ægypt*; what *Epiphonema's*, *prosopopoea's*, and whatsoever else may be required to the texture of so rich and glorious a peece!

And the song of *Salomon*, which is onely left vs of a thousand, is it not a continued Allegorie of the 5  
Mysticall loue betwixt *Christ* and his *Church*? Moreouer, the Apostles themselues haue not disdained to alledge the authoritie of the heathen Poets, *Aratus*, *Menander*, and *Epimenides*. As also the fathers of the Church, *Nazianzen*, *S. Augustine*, *Bernard*, *Prudentius*, with many others, 10  
beside the allowance they haue giuen of Poetrie, they teach vs the true vse and end thereof, which is to compose the Songs of *Sion*, and addresse the fruite of our inuention to his glorie, who is the author of so goodly a gift, which we abuse to our loues, light fancies, and basest 15  
affections.

And if Mechanicall Arts hold their estimation by their effects in base subiects, how much more deserueth this to be esteemed that holdeth so soueraigne a power ouer the minde, can turne brutishnesse into Ciuilitie, make the lewd 20  
honest (which is *Scaligers* opinion of *Virgils* Poeme), turne hatred to loue, cowardise into valour, and in brieffe, like a Queene, command ouer all affections.

Moreouer, the *Muse*, *Mirth*, *Graces*, and perfect *Health* haue euer an affinitie each with either. I remember 25  
*Plutarch* telleth vs of *Telesilla*, a noble and braue Ladie, who, being dangerously sicke, and imagined past recouerie, was by the Oracle aduised to apply her minde to the Muse and Poetrie; which shee diligently obseruing, recouered in a short space, and withall grew so sprightly couragious, 30  
that hauing well fortified *Argos* with diuers companies of women onely, her selfe with her companions sallying out, entertained *Cleomenes*, K. of the *Lacedæmonians*, with such a *Camisado*, that he was faine to shew his back, leauing a good part of his people behinde to fill ditches; and 35

then by plaine force of Armes draue out *Demaratus*, another king, who lay very strong in garrison within.

*Alexander*, by the reading of *Homer*, was especially moued to goe thorough with his conquests.

5 *Leonidas*, also, that braue King of the *Spartanes*, being asked how *Tirtæus* (who wrote of warre in verse) was esteemed among Poets, replied: excellently. For my souldiers, quoth he, mooued onely with his verses, runne with a resolute courage to the battaile, fearing no perill  
10 at all.

What other thing gaue an edge to the valour of our ancient Britons but their *Bardes* (rememberd by *Athenæus*, *Lucan*, and sundry other), recording in verse the braue exploits of their nation, and singing the same vnto  
15 their Harpes at their publike feasts and meetings, amongst whom *Taliessin*, a learned Bard, and Master to *Merlin*, sung the life and actes of King *Arthur*?

Hence hath Poetry neuer wanted her Patrones, and euen the greatest Monarches and Princes, as well Christian  
20 as Heathen, haue exercised their Inuention herein; as that great Glorie of Christendome, *Charlemaine*, who, among many other things, wrote his Nephew *Roulands* Epitaphe, after he was slaine in a battell against the *Sarracens*, among the <sup>1</sup>*Pyrenæan* hills; *Alphonsus*, King of *Naples*, *Panor-*  
25 whose onely delight was the reading of *Virgil*; *Robert*, *mitan.*  
King of *Sicilie*; and that thrice renowned and learned *lib. I. de*  
French King, who, finding *Petrarchs* Toombe without any *gestis*  
inscription or Epitaphe, wrote one himselfe (which yet *Alphonsi.*  
remaineth) saying: *Shame it was, that he who sung his*  
30 *Mistresse praise seauen yeares before her death, and twelue*  
*yeares should want an Epitaphe!* Among the Heathen are

<sup>1</sup> The place to this day is called *Rowlands vallis*, and was in times past a great pilgrimage; there being a Chappell built ouer the tombe, & dedicated to our Ladie, called commonly but corruptly our Ladie of *Ronceuall*.

eternized for their skill in Poesie, *Augustus Cæsar, Octavius, Adrian, Germanicus.*

Euery child knoweth how deare the workes of *Homer* were vnto *Alexander, Euripides* to *Amyntas*, King of *Macedon*, *Virgil* to *Augustus*, *Theocritus* to *Ptolemey* and <sup>5</sup> *Berenice*, King and Queene of *Ægypt*, the stately *Pindar* to *Hiero* King of *Sicilie*, *Ennius* to *Scipio*, *Ausonius* to *Gratian*, who made him Pro-consull; in our owne Countrey, *Chaucer* to <sup>1</sup> *Richard* the second, *Gower* to *Henrie* the fourth, with others I might alledge. 10

The Lady *Anne* of *Bretaigne*, who was <sup>2</sup>twice French Queene, passing through the Presence in the Court of *France*, espying *Chartier*, the Kings Secretarie and a famous Poet, leaning vpon his elbow at a Tables end fast asleepe, shee, stooping downe and openly kissing him, <sup>15</sup> said: *We must honour with our kisse the mouth from whence so many sweete verses and golden Poems haue proceeded.*

But some may aske me, How it falleth out that Poets now adaies are of no such esteeme as they haue beene in former times? I answere, because vertue, in our declining <sup>20</sup> and worsen daies, generally findeth no regard: Or rather more truly with *Aretine* (being demaunded why Princes were not so liberall to Poesie and other good Arts as in former times), *Because their conscience telleth them how vnworthy they are of the praises giuen them by Poets; as for* <sup>25</sup> *other Arts, they make no account of that they know not.*

But since we are heere (hauing before ouer-runne the Champaigne and large field of Historie) let vs a while rest our selues in the garden of the Muses, and admire the bountie of heauen, in the seuerall beauties of so many <sup>30</sup> diuine and fertile wits.

We must beginne with the *King of Latine Poets*, whom

<sup>1</sup> Who gaue him, it is thought, his Mannor of *Ewhelme* in Oxfordshire.

<sup>2</sup> To *Charles* the eight & *Lewis* the twelfth.

Nature hath reared beyond imitation, and who aboue all other onely deserueth the name of a Poet, I meane *Virgil*. In him you shall at once finde, not else-where, that *Prudence*, *Efficacie*, *Variety*, and *Sweetnesse*, which *Prudence*.

5 *Scaliger* requireth in a Poet and maketh his prime vertues.

Vnder *Prudence* is comprehended, out of generall learning and iudgement, that discreete, apt suting and disposing as well of Actions as Words in their due place, time, and manner; which in *Virgil* is not obserued by one among

10 twentie of our ordinary Grammarians, *Who* (to vse the words of the Prince of learning hereupon) *onely in shallow and small Boates glide ouer the face of the Virgilian Sea*. How *In Poetiv. lib. 3. qui & Idea, ca. 25.* diuinely, according to the *Platonickes*, doth he discourse of the Soule! how properly of the Nature, number of winds,

15 seasons of the yeare, qualities of Beasts, Nature of Hearbs!

What in-sight into ancient *Chronologie* and *Historie*! In briefe, what not worthy the knowledge of a diuine wit!

To make his *Æneas* a man of extraordinary aspect and comlinesse of personage, he makes *Venus* both his mother

20 and Ladie of his *Horoscope*. And forasmuch as griefe and perpetuall care are inseparable companions of all great and noble atchieuements, he giues him *Achates quasi* *ἄχος ἄρης*, his faithfull companion. What immooued constancy, when no teares or entreaty of *Eliza* could cause

25 him stay! What *Piety*, *Pitty*, *Fortitude*, beyond his companions! See how the Diuine Poet gaue him leaue to be wounded, lest his valour in so many skirmishes might bee questioned, and that a farre off, not at hand, that rather it might be imputed to his Fortune then his rashnesse or

30 weaknesse; then by one who could not be knowne, to giue the enemie occasion rather of feare then of challenging the glorie.

And whereas he bringeth in *Camilla*, a courageous Lady, and inuincible at the Swords point in encountring other, yet he neuer bringeth her to try her valour with

35 *Aeneas*. Again, that *Tarchon* and she might shew their *Aeneid. 11.*



braue deeds, he makes *Aeneas* absent, as also when *Turnus* so resolutely brake into his Tents. Lastly, what excellent iudgment sheweth he in appropriating the accidents and Histories of his owne times to those of the ancient, as where he bringeth in *Venulus* plucked by force from his Horse, and carried away with full speed! The like *Cæsar* confesseth to haue happened to himselfe. *Aeneas*, with his right arme naked, commaunds his Souldiers to abstaine from slaughter. The like did *Cæsar* at the battaile of *Pharsalie*, and with the same words. But thus much out of the heape and most iudicious obseruations of the most learned *Scaliger*.

*Parcite  
cuius.*

*Efficacie* is a power of speech, which representeth a thing after an excellent manner: neither by bare words onely, but by presenting to our minds the liuely *Idæa's* or formes of things so truly, as if wee saw them with our eyes; as the *places in Hell*, the fierie Arrow of *Acesta*, the description of *Fame*, the flame about the Temples of *Ascanius*; but of actions more open, and with greater Spirit, as in that passage and passion of *Dido*, preparing to kill herselfe:

*Aeneid.* 4.

*At trepida & cœptis immanibus effera Dido,  
Sanguineam voluens aciem, maculisque trementes  
Interfusa genas, & pallida morte futura,  
Interiora domus irrumpit limina, & altos  
Conscendit furibunda rogos, enseque recludit  
Dardanium, &c.*

25

Which, for my English Readers sake, I haue after my manner translated, though assured all the translations in the world must come short of the sweetnesse and Maiesty of the Latine.

But she amazd, and fierce by cruell plots,  
Rouling about her bloody eye, her cheekes  
All-trembling and arising, full of spots,  
And pale with death at hand, perforce she breakes  
Into the in-most roomes,—

35

Enraged then she climbs the loftie pile,  
 And out of sheath the *Dardane* sword doth draw,  
 Ne're for such end ordained; when a while  
 The *Troian* garments and knowne couch she saw,  
 5 With trickling teares her selfe thereon she cast,  
 And hauing paus'd a little, spake her last:  
 Sweete spoiles, while Fates and Heauens did permit,  
 Receiue this soule, and rid me of my cares;  
 What race my Fortune gaue, I finish'd it, &c.

10 Moreouer, that liuely combat betweene *Nisus* and  
*Volscens*, with many other of most excellent life.

A sweete verse is that which, like a dish with a delicate Sweet-  
 Sauce, inuites the Reader to taste, euen against his will; nesse.  
 the contrarie is harshnesse: hereof I giue you an example  
 15 in the description of young *Pallas* (whom imagine you see  
 laid forth newly slaine vpon a Biere of Crabtree and Oken  
 rods, couered with Straw, and arched ouer with greene  
 boughes) then which no Nectar can be more delicious.

20 *Qualem virgineo demessum pollice florem,*  
*Seu mollis violæ, seu languentis Hyacinthi,*  
*Cui neque fulgor adhuc, nec dum sua forma recessit,*  
*Non iam mater alit tellus viresque ministrat, &c.* *Aeneid. 11.*

Euen as the Flower by Maidens finger mowne,  
 Of th' drooping Hy'cinth or soft Violet,  
 25 Whose beautie's fading, yet not fully gone,  
 Now mother Earth no more doth nourish it, &c.

The like of faire *Eurialus* breathing his last:

30 *Purpureus veluti cum flos succisus aratro,*  
*Languescit moriens, lassove papauera collo*  
*Demisere caput, pluvia cum fortè gravantur:* *Aeneid. 9.*

Looke how the purple Flower, which the Plow  
 Hath shorne in sunder, languishing doth die;  
 Or Poppies downe their wearie neckes do bow,  
 And hang the head, with raine when laden lie, &c.

35 This kind *Plutarch* tearmeth *Flowery*, as hauing in it ἀνθηρὸν  
 a beautie and sweete grace to delight, as a Flower. κάλλος

*Varietie* is various, and the rules of it so difficult, that ἔχον καὶ  
 χάριν εἰς τὸ

τέρπειν καὶ  
ἡδ(ύν)ειν,  
ὥσπερ  
ἄνθος.

to define or describe it were as to draw one picture which should resemble all the faces in the World, changing it selfe like *Proteus* into all shapes: which our Diuine Poet so much and with such excellent art affecteth, that seldome or neuer he vttereth words or describeth actions spoken 5 or done after the same manner, though they be in effect the same; yea, though the conclusion of all the Bookes of his *Æneides* bee Tragically, saue the first, yet are they so tempered and disposed with such varietie of accidents, that they bring admiration to the most diuine iudgements: 10 among them all, not one like another, saue the ends of *Turnus* and *Mezentius*. What varietie in his battailes, assailing the enemies Campe, besieging Cities, broyles among the common people, set battailes in fields, aides of horse and foot, &c.! Neuer the same wounds, but giuen 15 with diuers weapons; as heere one is wounded or slaine with a peece of a Rock, a Flint, Fire-brand, Club, Halberd, Long pole; there another with a drinking Boule or Pot, a Rudder, Dart, Arrow, Lance, Sword, \* Bals of Wildfire, &c.: In diuers places, as the throat, head, thigh, breast, 20 hip, hand, knee; before, behind, on the side, standing, lying, running, flying, talking, sleeping, crying out, entreating: Of place, as in the field, in the Tents, at Sacrifice, vpon the guard; in the day time, in the night. To proceede further were to translate *Virgil* himselfe; there- 25 fore hitherto of varietie. I forbear his most liuely descriptions of persons, times, places, and manner; his most sweete and proper Similitudes; as where he resembleth *Æneas*, who could not be moued by any entreatie or teares of *Dido* or her Sister *Anna*, to a 30 stubborne Oake after the manner:

Vide Scal.,  
lib. 3. Poet.  
cap. 27.

\*Phalaricæ.

*Æneid.* 4.

*At veluti annosam valido cum robore quercum,  
Alpini Boreæ, nunc hinc nunc flatibus illinc,  
Eruere inter se certant: it stridor & altè  
Consternunt terram concusso stipite frondes, &c.*

As when the *Alpine* winds with each contend,  
 Now this, now that way, with their furious might,  
 Some aged Oake vp by the rootes to rend :  
 Lowd whistling's heard, the earth bestrewed quite  
 5 (The body reeling) all about with leaues :  
 While it stands firme, and irremoued cleaues  
 Vnto the Rocke ; for looke how high it heaues  
 The loftie head to heauen-ward, so low  
 The stubborne roote doth downe to hell-ward grow.

10 Againe, that elegant comparison of *Aruns* (hauing  
 cowardly slaine the braue Ladie *Camilla*, and retired  
 himselfe for feare into the body of the Armie) to a Wolfe  
 that had done a mischiefe, and durst not shew his head :

15 *At velut ille, prius quam tela inimica sequantur,* *Aeneid. 11.*  
*Continuo in montes sese auisus abdidit altos*  
*Occiso pastore, Lupus, magnove iuvenco ;*  
*Consciuis audacis facti, caudamque remulcens*  
*Subiecit pavitantem vtero silvasque petiuit, &c.*

20 And as a Wolfe that hath the Shepheard slaine,  
 Or some great beast, before the Countrey rise,  
 Knowing him guiltie, through by-waies amaine  
 Hath got the Mountaines, leering where he lies,  
 Or clapt his taile betwixt his legges, in feare  
 Tane the next Coppise, till the Coast be cleare.

25 After *Virgil*, I bring you *Ouid*, as well because they *Ouid.*  
 liued in one time (yet *Ouid* confesseth he saw *Virgil* but *Virgilium*  
 once in all his life) as that he deserueth to be second in *tantum*  
 imitation for the sweetnesse and smooth current of his *vidi.*  
 stile, euery where seasoned with profound and antique  
 30 learning: among his Workes, his Epistles are most  
 worthy your reading, being his neatest peece, euery where  
 embellished with excellent and wise Sentences; the  
 numbers smoothly falling in, and borrowing their lustre  
 and beautie from imitation of natiue and antique Simplicitie :  
 35 that of *Acontius* is somewhat too wanton; those three, of  
*Vlysses*, *Demophon*, and *Paris* to *Oenone*, are suspected,

for the weaknesse of conceit in regard of the other, to be none of *Ouids*.

Concerning his bookes *Amorum* and *de Arte amandi*, the wit with the truly ingenuous and learned will beare out the wantonnesse; for with the weeds there are delicate 5 flowers in those walkes of *Venus*. For the Argument of his *Metamorphosis*, he is beholden to *Parthenius* and diuers others, and those who long before wrote of the same subiect.

*Vide*  
*Surium, in*  
*Commen-*  
*tario*  
*rerum in*  
*orbe ge-*  
*starum.*  
*Anno*  
*1581,*  
*fol. 1026.*

About the yeare 1581, when the King of *Poland* made 10 warre in *Moscovia*, certaine *Polonian* Embassadors trauailing into the in-most places of *Moscovia*, as farre as *Podolia* and *Kiouia*, they passed the great Riuer *Boristhenes*, hauing in their company a certaine young Gentleman, very well seene in the Latine, Greeke, and Hebrew 15 tongues; withall an excellent Poet and Historian: he perswaded the *Polonians* to well horse themselues, and ride with him a little further; for he would (said he) shew them *Ouids* Sepulcher; which they did: and when they were gone six daies iourney beyond *Boristhenes*, through 20 most vaste and desolate places, at last they came into a most sweete and pleasant valley, wherein was a cleere running Fountaine, about which the grasse growing very thicke and high, with their Swords and Fauchions they cut it downe, till at last they found a Stone Chest or 25 Coffin, couered ouer with stickes and shrubs, whereon, it being rubbed and cleansed from Mosse and filth, they read *Ouids* Epitaph, which was this:

*Hic situs est vates; quem Diui Cæsaris ira*  
*Augusti Latia cedere iussit humo:*  
*Sæpè miser voluit Patrijs occumbere terris,*  
*Sed frustrà: hunc illi fata dedere locum.*

30

This his Sepulcher (saith mine Authour) remaineth vpon the borders of *Greece*, neere to the *Euxine* Sea, and is yet to be seene.

35



Of *Lyricke* Poets, as well Greeke as Latine, hold *Horace* *Horace*.  
 in highest account, as the most acute and artificiall of  
 them all, hauing attained to such height that to the discreete  
 iudgement he hath cut off all hope of equalizing him: his  
 5 Stile is elegant, pure, and sinewie, with most wittie and  
 choice sentences, neither *humili contentus Stylo* (as *Quintilian*  
 saith of him) *sed grandiloquo & sublimi*: Yea, and if we  
 beleeeue *Scaliger*, more accurate and sententious then  
*Pindar*. His *Odes* are of most sweete and pleasant in-  
 10 uention, beyond all reprehension, euery where illustred  
 with sundrie and rare figures, and verses so fluent that  
 the same *Scaliger* protesteth he had rather be a composer of  
 the like then be King of whole *Arragon*. In his *Satyres* *Scaliger*.  
 he is quicke, round, and pleasant; and as nothing so *Poet. lib. 6.*  
 15 bitter, so not so good as *Iuuenal*: his *Epistles* are *Totius*  
 neate; his *Poetica*, his worst peece; for while he teacheth *Tarra-*  
 the Art, he goeth vnartificially to worke, euen in the verie *conensis*  
 beginning. *Rex.*

*Iuuenal* of *Satyrists* is the best, for his *Satyres* are far *Iuuenal*.  
 20 better then those of *Horace*; and though he be sententious  
 tart, yet is his phrase cleare and open.

*Persius*, I know not why we should so much affect him, *Persius*.  
 since with his obscuritie hee laboureth not to affect vs;  
 yet in our learned age he is now discouered to euery  
 25 Schoole-boie: his stile is broken, froward, vnpleasing, and  
 harsh.

In *Martial* you shall see a diuine wit, with a flowing *Martial*.  
 puritie of the Latine tongue, a true Epigrammatist: his  
 verse is cleare, full, and absolute good; some few, too  
 30 wanton and licentious, being winked at.

*Lucane* breathes with a great spirit, wherefore some of *Lucane*.  
 our shallow Grammarians haue attempted to equall him  
 with *Virgil*; but his errour is, while hee doth *ampullare*  
 with bigge sounding words and a conceipt vnbounded,  
 35 furious, and ranging, and cannot with *Virgil* containe

himselfe within that sweete, humble, and vnaffected moderation, he incurreth a secret enuie and ridiculous contempt, which a moderate and well tempered style auoideth.

*Seneca.* *Seneca*, for Maiestie and state, yeeldeth not to any of 5 the *Grecians* whosoeuer,—*Cultu & nitore*, to vse *Scaligers* words, farre excelling *Euripides*,—and albeit he borrowed the Argument of his Tragædies from the Græcians, yet the Spirit, loftinesse of sound, and Maiestie of stile, is meereley his owne.

10

*Claudian.* *Claudian* is an excellent and sweete Poet, onely ouerborne by the meannesse of his subiect; but what wanted to his matter, he supplied by his wit and happie inuention.

*Statius.* *Statius* is a smooth and a sweete Poet, comming nearest of any other to the state and Maiestie of *Virgils* verse; 15 and, *Virgil* onely excepted, is the Prince of Poets, aswell Greekes as Latine; for he is more flowery in figures, and writeth better lines then *Homer*. Of his works, his *Syluæ* are the best.

*Propertius.* *Propertius* is an easie, cleare, and true Elegiacke, following 20 the tract of none saue his owne inuention.

Among Comicke Poets, how much antiquitie attributed to *Plautus* for his pleasant veine (to whom *Volcatius* giueth the place next to *Cæcilius*, and *Varro* would make the mouth of Muses), so much doe our times yeeld to 25

*Terence.* *Terence* for the puritie of his stile; wherefore *Scaliger* willeth vs to admire *Plautus* as a Comædian, but *Terence* as a pure and elegant speaker.

Thus haue I, in brieffe, comprised for your behoofe the large censure of the best of Latine Poets, as it is copiously 30 deliuered by the Prince of all learning and Iudge of iudgements, the diuine *Iul. Cæs. Scaliger*. But while we looke backe to antiquitie, let vs not forget our later and moderne times (as imagining nature hath heretofore extracted her quintessence and left vs the dregges), which 35

produce as fertile wits as perhaps the other ; yea, and in our *Brittaine*.

Of Latine Poets of our times, in the iudgement of *Beza* and the best learned, *Buchanan* is esteemed the cheife ; *Buchanan*.  
 5 who albeit in his person, behauiour, and fashion he was rough hewen, slouenly, and rude, seldome caring for a better outside then a Rugge-gowne girt close about him, yet his inside and conceipt in Poesie was most rich, and his sweetnesse and facilitie in a verse vnimitably excellent ;  
 10 as appeareth by that Master peece, his *Psalmes*, as farre beyond those of *B. Rhenanus* as the *Stanza's* of *Petrarch* the rimes of *Skelton* ; but deseruing more applause (in my opinion) if hee had fallen vpon another subiect ; for I say with one, *Mihi spiritus diuinus eiusmodi placet, quo seip-* *Iul. Cæs.*  
 15 *sum ingessit a Patre ; & illorum piget qui David Psalmos* *Scaliger.*  
*suis calamistris inustos sperarant efficere plausibiliores.*  
 And certaine in that boundlesse field of Poeticall inuention it cannot be auoided but something must be distorted beside the intent of the Diuine enditer.

20 His Tragedies are loftie, the stile pure, his Epigrams not to be mended, saue heere and there (according to his Genius) too broad and bitter.

But let vs looke behinde vs, and wee shall finde one English-bred, whose glorie and worth (although *Cineri* *Ioseph of Exeter.*  
 25 *suppôsta doloso*) is inferiour neither to *Buchanan* or any of the ancients ; and so much the more to be valued, by how much the brighter he appeared out of the fogges of Barbarisme and ignorance in his time ; that is, *Ioseph* of *Exeter*, who liued vnder *Henrie* the 2. and *Richard*  
 30 the first ; who wrote that singular and stately Poeme of the Troian warre, after the Historie of *Dares Phrygius*, which the Germanes haue printed vnder the name of *Cornelius Nepos*. He died at *Bourdeaux* in *France*, where he was Archbishop, where his monument is yet to bee  
 35 seene.

After him, all that long tract of ignorance, vntill the daies of *Henrie* the 8. (which time *Erasmus* calleth the *Golden Age of learning*, in regard of so many famously learned men it produced more than euer heretofore) flourished Sir *Thomas More*, sometime Lord Chancellor of *England*, a man of most rich and pleasant inuention: his verse fluent, nothing harsh, constrained or obscure, wholly composed of conceipt and inoffensiuie mirth, that he seemeth *ad lepôres fuisse natum*. How wittily doth hee play vpon the Arch-cuckold *Sabinus*, scoffe at Frenchified *Lalus*, and *Heruey*, a French cowardly Captaine, beaten at the Sea by our English and his shippe burned, yet his victorie and valour, to the English disgrace, proclaimed by *Brixius* a Germane *Pot-aster*! What can be more loftie then his gratulatorie verse to King *Henrie* vpon his Coronation day; more wittie then that Epigramme vpon the name of *Nicolaus*, an ignorant Phisitian, that had beene the death of thousands, and *Abyngdons* Epitaph; more sweete then that nectar Epistle of his to his daughters, *Margaret*, *Elizabeth*, and *Cicelie*? But as these ingenious exercises bewraied in him an extraordinary quicknesse of wit and learning, so his *Vtopia* his depth of iudgment in State-affaires; then which, in the opinion of the most learned *Budæus*, in a preface before it, our age hath not seene a thing more deepe & accurate. In his yonger yeeres there was euer a friendly and vertuous emulation, for the palme of inuention and poesie, betweene *William Lillie*, the author of our Grammer, and him; as appeareth by their seuerall translations of many Greeke Epigrammes, and their inuention tried vpon one subiect, notwithstanding they lou'd and liu'd together as deerest friends. *Lillie* also was, beside an excellent Latine Poet, a singular Græcian; who after he trauelled all *Greece* ouer, and many parts of *Europe* beside, and liued some foure or fие yeeres in the Ile of the *Rhodes*, he returned

Sir *Thomas*  
*More.*

*William*  
*Lillie.*

home, and by *John Collet*, Deane of *Paules*, was elected Master of *Pauls Schoole*, which he had newly founded.

Shortly after began to grow eminent, aswell for Poesie as all other generall learning, Sir *Thomas Challoner*, Sir Knight (father to the truly honest, and sometime louer of all excellent parts, Sir *Thomas Challoner*, who attended vpon the late Prince); borne in *London*, brought vp in *Cambridge*; who, hauing left the Vniuersitie, and followed the Court a good while, went ouer with Sir *Henry Knyuet*, Embassadour to *Charles* the fift, as his friend and companion; what time the Emperour being preparing a mightie fleete against the Turkes in *Argier*, the English Embassadour, Sir *Thomas Challoner*, *Henry Knowles*, M. *Henry Isam*, and others, went in that seruice as voluntaries with the Emperour. But the Galley, wherein Sir *Thomas Challoner* was, being cast away by foulennesse of weather, after he had laboured by swimming for his life as long as he was able, and the strength of his armes failing him, he caught hold vpon a cable throwne out from another galley, to the losse and breaking of many of his teeth, and by that meanes saued his life. After the death of King *Henry* the 8, he was in the battaile of *Muskeborough*, and knighted by the Duke of *Sommerset*. And in the beginning of the raigne of Queene *Elizabeth*, hee went ouer Embassadour into *Spaine*, where, at his houres of leisure, he compiled ten elegant bookes in Latine vers, *de Repub. Anglorum instauranda*, superuised after his death by *Malim*, and dedicated to the old Lord *Burghley*, Lord Treasurer. Being sent for home by her Maiestie, he shortly after died in *London*, and was buried in *Paules* neere to the steppes of the Quire, toward the South-doore, vnder a faire marble; but the brasse, and epitaphe written by Doctor *Haddon*, by sacrilegious hands is since torne away. But the *Muse* and *Eternall Fame* haue reared him a monument more lasting and worthy the merit of so excellent a man.



Sir *Geoffrey*  
*Chaucer.*

Of English Poets of our owne Nation, esteeme Sir *Geoffrey Chaucer* the father; although the stile for the antiquitie may distast you, yet as vnder a bitter and rough rinde there lyeth a delicate kernell of conceit and sweete inuention. What Examples, Similitudes, Times, Places, 5 and aboue all, Persons with their speeches and attributes, doe, as in his *Canterburie*-tales, like these threds of gold the rich *Arras*, beautifie his worke quite thorough! And albeit diuers of his workes are but meere translations out of *Latine* and *French*, yet he hath handled them so 10 artificially that thereby he hath made them his owne, as his *Troilus* and *Cresseid*. The Romant of the Rose was the Inuention of *Iehan de Meunes*, a French Poet, whereof he translated but onely the one halfe; his *Canterburie*-tales without question were his owne inuention, all 15 circumstances being wholly English. Hee was a good Diuine, and saw in those times without his spectacles, as may appeare by the Plough-man and the Parsons tale; withall an excellent Mathematician, as plainly appeareth by his discourse of the Astrolabe to his little sonne *Lewes*. 20 In brieffe, account him among the best of your English bookes in your librarie.

*Gower.*

*Gower*, being very gracious with King *Henrie* the 4, in his time carried the name of the onely Poet, but his verses, to say truth, were poore and plaine, yet full of 25 good and graue Moraltie; but, while he affected altogether the French phrase and words, made himself too obscure to his Reader; beside, his inuention commeth farre short of the promise of his Titles. He published onely (that I know of) three bookes, which at *S. Marie Oueries* in 30 *Southwarke*, vpon his monument lately repaired by some good Benefactor, lie vnder his head; which are, *Vox clamantis*, *Speculum Meditantis*, and *Confessio Amantis*. He was a Knight, as also was *Chaucer*.

*Lydgate.*

After him succeeded *Lydgate*, a Monke of *Burie*, who 35

wrote that bitter Satyre of *Peirs Plow-man*. He spent most part of his time in translating the workes of others, hauing no great inuention of his owne. He wrote for those times a tollerable and smooth verse.

5 Then followed *Harding*, and after him *Skelton*, a Poet *Harding*.  
*Laureate*, for what desert I could neuer heare. If you *Skelton*.  
 desire to see his veine and learning, an Epitaph vpon  
 King *Henry* the seauenth at *West-minster* will discouer it.

In the latter end of King *Henrie* the 8, for their excellent  
 10 facultie in Poesie were famous the right noble *Henrie* *Henrie*  
*Earle of Surrey* (whose Songs and Sonnets yet extant *Earle of*  
 are of sweete conceipt) and the learned but vnfortunate *Surrey*.  
*Sir Thomas Wyat*.

In the time of *Edward* the sixth lived *Sternhold*, whom *Sir*  
 15 King *Henry*, his father, a little before had made groome *Thomas*  
 of his Chamber, for turning certaine of *Dauids* Psalmes *Wyat*.  
 into verse; and merrie *Iohn Heywood*, who wrote his  
 Epigrammes, as also *Sir Thomas More* his *Vtopia*, in the  
 parish wherein I was borne; where either of them dwelt  
 20 and had faire possessions. *North-*  
*mimmes,*  
 in *Her-*  
*ford-shire,*  
 neere to  
*S. Al-*  
*banes.*

About Queene *Maries* time flourished Doctor *Phaer*,  
 who in part translated *Virgils Aeneids*, after finished by  
*Arthur Golding*. *S. Al-*  
*banes.*

In the time of our late Queene *Elizabeth*, which was  
 25 truely a golden Age (for such a world of refined wits and  
 excellent spirits it produced, whose like are hardly to be  
 hoped for in any succeeding Age), aboue others who  
 honoured Poesie with their pennes and practise (to omit  
 her Maiestie, who had a singular gift herein) were *Edward*  
 30 Earle of *Oxford*, the Lord *Buckhurst*, *Henry Lord Paget*;  
 our *Phaenix*, the noble *Sir Philip Sidney*; *M. Edward*  
*Dyer*, *M. Edmund Spencer*, *M. Samuel Daniel*, with sundry  
 others, whom (together with those admirable wits yet  
 liuing and so well knowne), not out of Enuie, but to  
 35 auoide tediousnesse, I ouerpasse. Thus much of Poetrie.

# MICHAEL DRAYTON

## EPISTLE TO HENRY REYNOLDS, ESQUIRE, OF POETS AND POESIE

1627

To my most dearely-loued friend,  
HENERY REYNOLDS, Esquire, of  
*Poets and Poesie.*

MY dearely loued friend, how oft haue we  
In winter euenings, meaning to be free,  
To some well chosen place vs'd to retire,  
And there with moderate meate and wine and fire,  
Haue past the howres contentedly with chat, 5  
Now talk'd of this, and then discours'd of that,  
Spoke our owne verses 'twixt our selues; if not,  
Other mens lines, which we by chance had got,  
Or some Stage pieces famous long before,  
Of which your happy memory had store; 10  
And I remember you much pleased were  
Of those who liued long agoe to heare,  
As well as of those of these latter times,  
Who haue inricht our language with their rimes,  
And in succession, how still vp they grew, 15  
Which is the subiect that I now pursue;  
For from my cradle, you must know that I  
Was still inclin'd to noble Poesie,  
And when that once *Pueriles* I had read,

And newly had my *Cato* construed,  
 In my small selfe I greatly marueil'd then,  
 Amongst all other, what strange kinde of men  
 These Poets were: And, pleased with the name,  
 5 To my milde Tutor merrily I came,  
 (For I was then a proper goodly page,  
 Much like a Pigmy, scarce ten yeares of age)  
 Clasping my slender armes about his thigh,  
 O my deare master! cannot you, quoth I,  
 10 Make me a Poet? doe it if you can,  
 And you shall see Ile quickly be a man.  
 Who me thus answered, smiling: Boy, quoth he,  
 If you'le not play the wag, but I may see  
 You ply your learning, I will shortly read  
 15 Some Poets to you. *Phæbus* be my speed,  
 Too't hard went I, when shortly he began,  
 And first read to me honest *Mantuan*,  
 Then *Virgils Eglogues*; being entred thus,  
 Me thought I straight had mounted *Pegasus*,  
 20 And in his full Careere could make him stop,  
 And bound vpon *Parnassus* by-clift top.  
 I scornd your ballet then, though it were done  
 And had for Finis *William Elderton*.  
 But soft, in sporting with this childish iest,  
 25 I from my subiect haue too long digrest,  
 Then to the matter that we tooke in hand,  
*Ioue* and *Apollo* for the *Muses* stand.

That noble *Chaucer*, in those former times,  
 The first inrich'd our *English* with his rimes,  
 30 And was the first of ours that euer brake  
 Into the *Muses* treasure, and first spake  
 In weighty numbers, deluing in the Mine  
 Of perfect knowledge, which he could refine,  
 And coyne for currant, and asmuch as then  
 35 The *English* language could expresse to men,

He made it doe, and by his wondrous skill,  
Gaued vs much light from his abundant quill.

And honest *Gower*, who in respect of him  
Had only sipt at *Aganippas* brimme,  
And though in yeares this last was him before, 5  
Yet fell he far short of the others store.

When after those, foure ages very neare,  
They with the Muses which conuersed were  
That Princely *Surrey*, early in the time  
Of the Eight *Henry*, who was then the prime 10  
Of *Englands* noble youth; with him there came  
*Wyat*, with reuerence whom we still doe name;  
Amongst our Poets *Brian* had a share  
With the two former, which accompted are  
That times best makers, and the authors were 15  
Of those small poems, which the title beare  
Of songs and sonnets, wherein oft they hit  
On many dainty passages of wit.

*Gascoine* and *Churchyard* after them againe  
In the beginning of *Eliza's* raine 20  
Accompted were great Meterers many a day,  
But not inspired with braue fier; had they  
Liu'd but a little longer, they had seene  
Their workes before them to haue buried beene.

Graue morrall *Spencer* after these came on, 25  
Then whom I am perswaded there was none  
Since the blind *Bard* his *Iliads* vp did make,  
Fitter a taske like that to vndertake,  
To set downe boldly, brauely to inuent,  
In all high knowledge surely excellent. 30

The noble *Sidney* with this last arose,  
That *Heroe* for numbers and for Prose,  
That throughly pac'd our language, as to show  
The plenteous *English* hand in hand might goe  
With *Greeke* and *Latine* and did first reduce 35



Our tongue from *Lillies* writing then in vse,  
 Talking of Stones, Stars, Plants, of fishes, Flyes,  
 Playing with words and idle Similies;  
 As th' *English* Apes and very Zanies be  
 5 Of euery thing that they doe heare and see,  
 So imitating his ridiculous tricks,  
 They spake and writ all like meere lunatiques.

Then *Warner* though his lines were not so trim'd,  
 Nor yet his Poem so exactly lim'd  
 10 And neatly ioynted but the Criticke may  
 Easily reprocue him, yet thus let me say  
 For my old friend, some passages there be  
 In him which I protest haue taken me  
 With almost wonder, so fine, cleere, and new,  
 15 As yet they haue bin equalled by few.

Next *Marlow*, bathed in the *Thespian* springs,  
 Had in him those braue translunary things  
 That the first Poets had, his raptures were  
 All ayre and fire, which made his verses cleere;  
 20 For that fine madnes still he did retaine,  
 Which rightly should possesse a Poets braine.

And surely *Nashe*, though he a Proser were,  
 A branch of Lawrell yet deserues to beare;  
 Sharply *Satirick* was he, and that way  
 25 He went, since that his being to this day  
 Few haue attempted, and I surely thinke  
 Those words shall hardly be set downe with inke  
 Shall scorch and blast so as his could, where he  
 Would inflict vengeance; and be it said of thee,  
 30 *Shakespeare*, thou hadst as smooth a Comick vaine,  
 Fitting the socke, and in thy naturall braine  
 As strong conception and as Cleere a rage,  
 As any one that trafiqu'd with the stage.

Amongst these *Samuel Daniel*, whom if I  
 35 May spake of, but to sensure doe denie,

Onely haue heard some wisemen him rehearse  
 To be too much *Historian* in verse;  
 His rimes were smooth, his meeters well did close,  
 But yet his maner better fitted prose.

{ Next these, learn'd *Iohnson* in this List I bring, 5  
 Who had drunke deepe of the *Pierian* spring,  
 Whose knowledge did him worthily prefer,  
 And long was Lord here of the Theater,  
 Who in opinion made our learn'st to sticke,  
 Whether in Poems rightly dramatique, 10  
 Strong *Seneca* or *Plautus*, he or they,  
 Should beare the Buskin or the Socke away.  
 Others againe here liued in my dayes,  
 That haue of vs deserued no lesse praise  
 For their translations, then the daintiest wit 15  
 That on *Parnassus* thinks he highst doth sit,  
 And for a chaire may mongst the Muses call,  
 As the most curious maker of them all:  
 As reuerent *Chapman* who hath brought to vs  
*Musæus*, *Homer*, and *Hesiodus* 20  
 Out of the Greeke; and by his skill hath reard  
 Them to that height, and to our tongue endear'd,  
 That were those Poets at this day aliue,  
 To see their bookes thus with vs to suruiue,  
 They would think, hauing neglected them so long, 25  
 They had bin written in the *English* tongue.

And *Siluester* whom from the *French* more weake  
 Made *Bartas* of his sixe dayes labour speake  
 In naturall *English*, who, had he there stayd,  
 He had done well, and neuer had bewraid 30  
 His owne inuention to haue bin so poore  
 Who still wrote lesse in striuing to write more.

Then dainty *Sands* that hath to *English* done  
 Smooth sliding *Ouid*, and hath made him run  
 With so much sweetnesse and vnusuall grace, 35

As though the neatnesse of the *English* pace  
Should tell the letting *Lattine* that it came  
But slowly after, as though stiffe and lame.

So *Scotland* sent vs hither for our owne

- 5 That man whose name I euer would haue knowne  
To stand by mine, that most ingenious knight,  
My *Alexander*, to whom in his right  
I want extreame, yet in speaking thus  
I doe but shew the loue that was twixt vs,  
10 And not his numbers which were braue and hie,  
So like his mind was his cleare Poesie;  
And my deare *Drummond*, to whom much I owe  
For his much loue, and proud I was to know  
His poesie, for which two worthy men  
15 I *Menstry* still shall loue, and *Hauthorne-den*.  
Then the two *Beamounts* and my *Browne* arose,  
My deare companions, whom I freely chose  
My bosome friends; and in their seuerall wayes  
Rightly borne Poets, and in these last dayes  
20 Men of much note and no lesse nobler parts,  
Such as haue freely tould to me their hearts,  
As I haue mine to them; but if you shall  
Say in your knowledge that these be not all  
Haue writ in numbers, be inform'd that I  
25 Only my selfe to these few men doe tye,  
Whose workes oft printed, set on euery post,  
To publike censure subiect haue bin most;  
For such whose poems, be they nere so rare,  
In priuate chambers that incloistered are,  
30 And by transcription daintily must goe,  
As though the world vnworthy were to know  
Their rich composures, let those men that keepe  
These wonderous reliques in their iudgement deepe  
And cry them vp so, let such Peeces bee  
35 Spoke of by those that shall come after me,

I passe not for them ; nor doe meane to run  
In quest of these that them applause haue wonne  
Vpon our Stages in these latter dayes,  
That are so many, let them haue ther bayes  
That doe deserue it ; let those wits that haunt  
Those publique circuits, let them freely chaunt  
Their fine Composures, and their praise pursue,  
And so, my deare friend, for this time adue.

# HENRY REYNOLDS

MYTHOMYSTES, WHEREIN A SHORT SVRVAY IS  
TAKEN OF THE NATVRE AND VALVE OF TRVE  
POESY AND DEPTH OF THE ANCIENTS ABOVE  
OVR MODERNE POETS.

1633?

To the Right Hon<sup>ll</sup> and my euer-honor'd Lord,  
Henry Lord Matrauers.

My Lord,

As I haue euer beene a louer (though ignorant one)  
5 of the Art of Painting, a frute of the Fancy that may be  
fitly called a silent Poësy, so of necessity must I loue her  
Sister the Art of Poësy, which is no other then a speaking  
Painting or Picture. And because I presume your Lo<sup>p</sup>,  
fauoring and so well vnderstanding the one, cannot but  
10 vnderstand and like the other, I aduenture to present  
a slight drafte of her to your Lo<sup>p</sup>, that, as you haue daily  
before your eyes one of the best suruayes of what is or  
can be in Picture, you may haue likewise limned, though  
in little, by a creature no lesse your owne then they are  
15 (how artfully I dare not auouch, but sure) a true picture of  
her Sister, Poësy: A Birth, my Lord, some moneths since  
conceiued, and euen as soone borne; and which, though  
now ope to other eyes, yet askes no other honour then  
your acceptance; to whome, in gratefull acknowledgment  
20 of your noble fauours, are (no lesse then this his slight  
issue is) for euer dedicated the best of the poore indeauors  
of the parent,

Your Lo<sup>ps</sup> humble and most  
affectionate seruant,

H. R.



TO THE CANDID AND INGENVOVS  
READER.

**L**OOKE not, generous Reader (for such I write to), for  
 more in the few following leaues then a plaine and  
 simple verity, vnadorned at all with eloquution or Rhetori- 5  
 call phrase, glosses fitter perhaps to be set vpon silken  
 and thinne paradoxicall semblances, then appertaining to  
 the care of who desires to lay downe a naked & vnmasked  
 Trueth. Nor expect heere an Encomium or praise of any  
 such thing as the world ordinarily takes Poësy for: That 10  
 same thing beeing, as I conceiue, a superficiall meere  
 outside of Sence, or gaye barke only (without the body)  
 of Reason: Witnesse so many excellent witts that haue  
 taken so much paines in these times to defend her; which  
 sure they would not haue done, if what is generally 15  
 receiued now a dayes for Poësy were not meerely a  
 faculty or occupation of so little consequence, as by the  
 louers thereof rather to be (in their owne fauour) excused,  
 then for any good in the thing it selfe to be commended.  
 Nor must thou heere expect thy solution, if thy curiosity 20  
 inuite thee to a satisfaction in any the vnder-Accidents,  
 but in meerely the Essentiall Forme, of true Poësy: Such  
 I call the Accidents or appendixes thereto, as conduce  
 somewhat to the Matter and End, nothing to the reall Forme  
 and Essence thereof. And these accidents, as I call them, 25  
 our commendens & defenders of Poësy haue chiefly and  
 indeed sufficiently insisted and dilated vpon; and are,  
 first, those floures (as they are called) of Rhetorick,  
 consisting of their *Anaphoras*, *Epistrophes*, *Metaphors*,  
*Metonymyes*, *Synecdoches*, and those their other potent 30  
 Tropes and Figures; helps (if at all of vse to furnish out  
 expressions with) much properer sure and more fitly  
 belonging to Poësy then Oratory; yet such helps, as if

Nature haue not beforehand in his byrth giuen a Poët, all such forced Art will come behind as lame to the businesse, and deficient, as the best-taught countrey Morris dauncer with all his bells and napkins will ill deserue to be in an  
5 Inne of Courte at Christmas tearmed the thing they call a fine reueller. The other Accidents of Poësy, and that are the greater part of the appurtenances thereof in the accoumpt of our Poëts of these times, are also heere vtterly vnmentioned; such as are, what sort of Poëme  
10 may admit the blanke verse, what requires exacte rime; where the strong line (as they call it), where the gentle sortes best; what subject must haue the verse of so many feete, what of other; where the masculine rime, where the feminine, and where the threesillabled (which the Italians  
15 call their *rime sdruciole*) are to be vsed. These, I say, and the like Adjuncts of Poësy, elsewhere amply discoursed of by many curious witts, are not heere mencioned. Only what I conceiued fit to speake, and with what breuity I could, of the Auncient Poëts in generall, and of the Forme  
20 and reall Essence of true Poësy, considered meerely in it owne worth and validity, without extrinsick and suppeditiue ornament at all, together with the paralell of their foyle, our Moderne Poëts and Poësyes, I haue (to the end to redeeme in some parte and vindicate that excellent Art  
25 from the iniury it suffers in the worlds generall misprizion and misconstruction thereof) heere touched, and but touched; the rather to awake some abler vnderstanding then my owne to the pursute, if they please, of a theame I conceiue well worthy a greater industry and happier  
30 leisures then I my selfe possesse.

## MYTHOMYSTES

WHEREIN A SHORT

SVRVAY IS TAKEN OF

THE NATVRE AND

VALVE OF TRVE

5

Poësie, and depth of the

Ancients aboue our

Moderne Poëts.

I HAUE thought vpon the times wee liue in, and am forced to affirme the world is decrepit, and, out of its <sup>10</sup> age & doating estate, subiect to all the imperfections that are inseparable from that wracke and maim of Nature, that the young behold with horror, and the sufferers thereof lye vnder with murmur and languishment. Euen the generall Soule of this great Creature, whereof euery <sup>15</sup> one of ours is a seuerall peece, seemes bedrid, as vpon her deathbed and neere the time of her dissolution to a second better estate and being; the yeares of her strength are past, and she is now nothing but disease, for the Soules health is no other then meere the knowledge of the <sup>20</sup> Truth of things: Which health the worlds youth inioyed, and hath now\* exchanged for it all the diseases of all errors, heresies, and different sects and schismes of opinions and vnderstandings in all matter of Arts, Sciences, and Learnings whatsoever. To helpe on these <sup>25</sup> diseases to incurability, what age hath euer beene so fruitfull of liberty in all kindes, and of all permission and allowance for this reason of ours, to runne wildely all her owne hurtfullest wayes without bridle, bound, or limit at all? For instance, what bookes haue wee of what <sup>30</sup> euer knowledge, or in what mysteries soeuer, wisely by

\* For the world hath lost his youth, and the times begin to waxe old.  
2 Esd.  
cap. 14.

our Auncients (for auoiding of this present malady the world is now falne into) couched and carefully infoulded, but must bee by euery illiterate person without exception deflowred and broke open, or broke in pieces, because  
 5 beyond his skill to vnlocke them? Or what Law haue we that provides for the restraint of these myriads of hot-headed wranglers & ignorant writers and teachers, which, out of the bare priuiledge of perhaps but puny graduate in some Vniuersity, will venter vpon all, euen the most  
 10 remoued and most abstruse knowledges, as perfect vnderstanders and expounders of them, vpon the single warrant of their owne braine, or inuenter of better themselues than all Antiquity could deliuer downe to them, out of the treasonous mint of their owne imaginations? What  
 15 hauocke, what mischiefe to all learnings, and how great a multiplicity of poysonous errorrs and heresies must not of necessity hence ensue and ouerspread the face of all Truths whatsoeuer?

Among these heresies (to omit those in matter of  
 20 Diuinity, or the right forme of worshipping God, which the Doctors of his Church are fitter to make the subiects of their tongues and pens, then I, a Layman, and all-vnworthy the taske), among, I say, these (if I may so call them) heresies, or ridiculous absurdities in matter of  
 25 humane letters, and their professors in these times, I find none so grosse, nor indeed any so great scandall or maim to humane learning, as in the almost generall abuse and violence offered to the excellent art of Poesye; first, by those learned, as they thinke themselues, of our dayes,  
 30 who call themselues Poets; and next by such as out of their ignorance heede not how much they prophane that high and sacred title in calling them so.

From the number of these first mentioned (for, for the last, I will not mention them, nor yet say as a graue Father,  
 35 and holy one too, of certaine obstinate heretikes said,

*Decipiantur in nomine diaboli*, but charitably wish their reformation and cure of their blindnesse),—from the multitude, I say, of the common rimers in these our moderne times and moderne tongues, I will exempt some few, as of a better ranke and condition than the rest. And first to 5 beginne with *Spaine*, I will say it may iustly boast to haue afforded (but many Ages since) excellent Poets, as *Seneca* the Tragedian, *Lucan*, and *Martiall* the Epigrammatist, with others; and in these latter times, as diuerse in Prose, some good Theologians also in Rime; but for other 10 Poesies in their now spoken tongue, of any great name, (not to extoll their trifling though extolled *Celestina*, nor the second part of their *Diana de Monte Major*, better much then the first, and these but poeticke prozers neither), I cannot say it affords many, if any at all: The 15 inclination of that people being to spend much more wit, and more happily, in those prose *Romances* they abound in, such as their *Lazarillo*, *Don Quixote*, *Guzman*, and those kind of *Cuenta's* of their *Picaro's* and *Gitanillas*, then in Rime. The *French* likewise, more than for a 20 *Ronsart* or *Des-Portes*, but chiefly their *Salust*, who may passe among the best of our modernes, I can say little of. *Italy* hath in all times, as in all abilities of the mind besides, been much fertiler than either of these in Poets: Among whom (to omit a *Petrarch*, who though he was an 25 excellent rimer in his owne tongue, and for his Latine *Africa* iustly deserued the lawrell that was giuen him, yet was a much excellenter Philosopher in prose; and with him, a *Bembo*, *Dante*, *Ang. Politiano*, *Caporale*, *Pietro Aretino*, *Sannazaro*, *Guarini*, and diuers others, men of 30 rare fancy all), I must preferre chiefly three; as the graue and learned *Tasso*, in his *Sette giorni* (a diuine worke) and his *Gierusalem liberata*, so farre as an excellent pile of meerely Morall Philosophy may deserue: Then *Ariosto*, for the artfull woofe of his ingenious though 35



vnmeaning fables, the best, perhaps, haue in that kind  
 beene sung since *Ouid*: And lastly, that smooth writ  
*Adonis* of *Marino*, full of various conception and diuersity  
 of learning. The *Douche* I cannot mention, being a  
 5 stranger to their minds and manners; therefore I will  
 returne home to my Countrey-men and mother tongue:  
 And heere exempt from the rest a *Chaucer*, for some of  
 his poëms, chiefly his *Troylus* and *Cresside*: Then the  
 generous and ingenious *Sidney*, for his smooth and  
 10 artfull *Arcadia*, and who I could wish had choze rather to  
 haue left vs of his pen an Encomiasticke Poeme in honour,  
 then prose-Apology in defence, of his fauorite, the ex-  
 cellent Art of Poesy. Next, I must approue the learned  
*Spencer*, in the rest of his Poëms no lesse then his *Fairy*  
 15 *Queene*, an exact body of the *Ethicke* doctrine; though  
 some good iudgments haue wisht, and perhaps not without  
 cause, that he had therein beene a little freer of his fiction,  
 and not so close riuetted to his Morall; no lesse then  
 many doe to *Daniells Ciuile warrs*, that it were, though  
 20 otherwise a commendable worke, yet somewhat more than  
 a true Chronicle history in rime; who, in other lesse  
 laboured things, may haue indeed more happily (howeuer,  
 alwayes cleerely and smoothly) written. Wee haue among  
 vs a late-writ *Polyolbion* also, and an *Agincourte*, wherin  
 25 I will only blame their honest Authours ill fate in not  
 hauing laid him out some happier Clime to haue giuen  
 honour and life to, in some happier language. After these,  
 besides some late dead, there are others now liuing,  
 drammaticke and lirie writers, that I must deseruedly  
 30 commend for those parts of fancy and imagination they  
 possesse, and should much more, could wee see them  
 somewhat more force those gifts and liberall graces of  
 Nature to the end shee gaue them, and therewith worke  
 and constantly tire vpon sollid knowledges; the which  
 35 hauing from the rich fountes of our reuerend Auncients

drawne with vnwearied and wholsomely imploied industries, they might in no lesse pleasing and profitable fictions than they haue done (the very fittest conduit-pipes) deriue downe to vs the vnderstanding of things euen farthest remooued from vs, and most worthy our speculation and 5 knowledge. But alas, such children of obedience, I must take leaue to say, the most of our ordinary pretenders to Poesy now a dayes are to their owne and the diseased times ill habits, as the racke will not bee able to make the most aduised among twenty of them confesse to haue 10 farther inquired or attended to more in the best of their Authours they haue chosen to read and study, then meerely his stile, phrase, and manner of expression, or scarce suffered themselues to looke beyond the dimension of their owne braine for any better counsaile or instruction 15 elsewhere. What can wee expect then of the Poems they write? Or what can a man, mee thinks, liken them more fitly to than to *Ixion's* issue? for hee that with meerely a naturall veine, and a little vanity of nature, which I can be content to allow a Poet, writes without other grounds 20 of sollid learning than the best of these vngrounded rimers vnderstand or aime at, what does he more than imbrace assembled cloudes with *Ixion*, and beget only Monsters? This might yet be borne with, did not these people as confidently vsurpe to themselues the title of Schollers and 25 learned men, as if they possesse the knowledges of all the *Magi* the wise East did euer breed; when, let me demand but a reason for security of my iudgement in allowing them for such, they strait giue mee to know they vnderstand the *Greeke* and *Latine*; and in conclusion, I discouer 30 the compleate crowne of all their ambition is but to be stiled by others a good *Latinist* or *Grecian*, and then they stile themselues good Schollers. So would I too, had I not before hand beene taught to say, *Non quia Græca scias, vel calles verba Latina, Doctus es aut sapiens, sed quia* 35

vera vides; & besides hapned to know a late trauailing  
*Odcombian* among vs, that became (I know not for what  
mortaller sinne than his variety of language) the common  
scorne and contempt of all the abusiue witts of the time,  
5 yet possest both those languages in great perfection; as  
his eloquent orations in both tounes, and vttered vpon his  
owne <sup>1</sup> head without prompting, haue euer sufficiently  
testified. Now finding this to be the greater part of the  
Schollership these our Poets indeauour to haue, and  
10 which many of them also haue, I find with all they sit  
downe as satisfied, as if their vnfurnisht breasts contained  
each one the learning and wisdome of an *Orpheus*, *Virgil*,  
*Hesiod*, *Pindarus*, and *Homer* altogether: When as what  
haue they else but the barke and cloathing meerely where-  
15 in their high and profound doctrines lay? Neuer looking  
farther into those their golden fictions for any higher  
sence, or any thing diuiner in them infoulded & hid from  
the vulgar, but lulled with the meruellous expression &  
artfull contexture of their fables,—*tanquam parui pueri* (as  
20 one saies) *per brumam ad ignem sessitantes, aniles nugas*  
*fabellasque de Poetis imbibunt, cum interim de vtiliore*  
*sanctioreque sententia minime sunt solliciti.*

<sup>1</sup> For they  
made him  
stand and  
speake  
Greeke  
vpon his  
head with  
his heeles  
vpward.

I haue staid longer and rubde harder, mee thinkes, than  
needes, vpon the sore of our now a day Poets. Let mee  
25 leaue them, and looke backe to the neuer-enough honoured  
Auncients; and set them before our eyes, who no lesse  
deseruedly wore the name of Prophets and Priuy-  
counsellors of the Gods (to vse their owne <sup>2</sup> phrase) or  
Sonnes of the Gods (as *Plato* <sup>3</sup> calls them) then Poets.  
30 To the end wee may, if in this declining state of the world  
we cannot rectify our oblique one by their perfect and  
strait line, yet indeauour it; and in the meane time giue  
the awefull reuerence due to them, for the many regions  
of distance between their knowledges and ours. And this  
35 that wee may the better doe, let vs paralell them with the

<sup>2</sup> *Hom. in*  
*Odiss.*

<sup>3</sup> *De Re-*  
*pub., lib. 2.*

Poets (if I may so call them) of our times, in three things only, and so carry along together their strait and our crooked line, for our better knowledge of them, and reformation of our selues. In the first place, then, let vs take a suruay of their naturall inclination and propensenesse 5 to the acquisition of the knowledge of truth, by what is deliuered to vs of them, as also of their willing neglect and auersion from all worldly businesse and cogitations that might be hindrances in the way to their desired end.

I. It is in humane experience found, as well as by all 10 writers determined, that the powerfulllest of al the affects of the minde is Loue, and therefore the diuine *Plato*<sup>1</sup> sayes it is iustly called *Roma*, which among the Greeks is force, potency, or vehemence. Of this Loue there be two kinds, Celestiall or Intellectual, or else Carnall or 15 Vulgar. Of both these kinds *Salomon* hath spoken excellently; of the Vulgar, in his Prouerbes as a Morall, and in his Ecclesiastes as a Naturall Philosopher; and diuine-like of the diuine and Intellectual Loue in his Canticle; for which it is called among all the rest of the 20 holy Scripture *Canticum canticorum* as the most sacred and diuine. The obiect of this Celestiall or Intellectual Loue (for the other, or vulgar Loue, it concernes mee not to mention) is the excellency of the Beauty of Supernall and Intellectual thinges: To the contemplation whereof, 25 rationall and wise Spirits are forcibly raised and lifted aloft; yea, lifted oftentimes so farre, sayes *Plato*,<sup>2</sup> aboue mortality, as euen in *Deum transeunt*, and so full fraught with the delight and abundance of the pleasure they feele in those their eleuations, raptures, and mentall alienations, 30 wherein the soule remaines for a time quite seperated as it were from the body, do not only sing with the ingenious *Ouid*, *Est Deus in nobis, agitante calescimus illo*, But in an Extaticke manner, and, to vse *Plato's*<sup>3</sup> phrase, *diuino afflatu concitati*, cry out with the intraunced *Zoroaster*, 35

<sup>1</sup> In *Phaedro*.

<sup>2</sup> In *Iōne*.

<sup>3</sup> In *Iōne*.

*Ope thine eyes, ope them wide, raise and lift them aloft. And of this the excellent Prince Io: Picus-Mirandula, in a discourse of his vpon the doctrine of Plato, giues the reason, saying: Such, whose vnderstanding (being by*  
5 *Philosophicall studie refined and illuminated) knowes this sensible Beauty to bee but the image of another more pure and excellent, leauing the loue of this, desire to see the other, and perseuering in this eleuation of the minde, arriue at last to that celestiall loue, which although it liues in the vnderstanding*  
10 *of the soule of euery man, yet they only (sayes he) make vse of it, and they are but a few, who, separating themselues wholly from the care of the body, seeme thence oftentimes extaticke, and as it were quite rauisht and exalted aboute the earth and all earthly amusements: And farther in another*  
15 *place of that Treatise, adds that many, with the feruent* Fol. 507.  
*loue of the beauty and excellence of intellectual things, haue beene so raized aboute all earthly considerations as they haue lost the vse of their corporall eyes. Homer (sayes he) with seeing the ghost of Achilles, which inspired*  
20 *him with that Poeticke fury, that who with vnderstanding reades shall find to containe in it all intellectuall contemplation, was thereby depriued (or faigned to bee depriued) of his corporall eye-sight, as one that seeing all things aboute, could not attend to the heeding of triuiall and meaner*  
25 *things below. And such rapture of the spirit is exprest (saies he) in the fable of Tyresias that Calimacus sings: who for hauing seene Pallas naked (which signifies no other then that Ideall beauty, whence proceeds all sincere wisdome, and not cloathed or couered with corporall matter) became sodainly*  
30 *blind, and was by the same Pallas made a Prophet; so as that which blinded his corporall eyes opened to him the eyes of his vnderstanding, by which he saw not only all things past, but also all that were to come.*

Loe, these, and such Spirits as these the learned Picus  
35 speakes of, such were those of those Auncient Fathers of



all learning, and *Tyresia*-like Prophets, as Poets ; such their neglect of the body and businesse of the world ! Such their blindness to all things of triuiall and inferiour condition : And such, lastly, were those extaticke eleuations, or that truly *diuinus furor* of theirs, which *Plato* speaking <sup>5</sup> of <sup>1</sup> sayes it is *a thing so sacred as non sine maximo fauore Dei comparari queat*, cannot bee attained to without the wonderfull fauour of God. And which selfe thing themselves ment in their fable of that beautifull *Ganimede* they sing of (which interpreted, is the contemplation of the <sup>10</sup> Soule, or the Rationall part of Man), so deare to the God of gods and men, as that he raiseth it vp to heauen, there to powre out to him (as they make him his cupbearer) the soueraigne Nectar of Sapience and wisdom, the liquor he is onely best pleased and delighted with. These were <sup>15</sup> those fathers, as I lately called them, and fountes of knowledge and learning, or nurses of wisdom, from whose pregnant breasts the whole world hath suckt the best part of all the humane knowledge it hath : And from whose wise and excellent fables, as <sup>2</sup> one of our late <sup>20</sup> Mythologians truely notes, *All those were after them called Philosophers* tooke their grounds and first *initia Philosophandi* ; adding, that their Philosophy was no other than meere *fabularum sensa ab inuolucris exuuiisque fabularum explicata*, the senses and meanings of fables <sup>25</sup> taken out and seperated from their huskes and inuolue-ments. With whom the excellent *Io: Picus* (or rather *Phœnix*, as wisemen <sup>3</sup> haue named him) consenting, sayes in his *Apologia* (speaking of the Poesies of *Zoroaster* and *Orpheus*) : *Orpheus apud Græcos fermè intiger ; Zoroaster* <sup>30</sup> *apud eos mancus, apud Caldæos absolutior legitur. Ambo* (sayes he) *priscae Sapientiae patres & authores* : Both of them fathers and authors of the auncient Wisdom. With these also the most autenticke *Iamblicus*, the *Caldean*, who writes *Pythagoras* had *Orphicam Theologiam tanquam* <sup>35</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *In Ioue.*

<sup>2</sup> *Nata: Comes.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ang: Politianus* (who likewise calls *Doctiorum omnium doctissimus*), *Pau: Iouius, Baroaldus,* and our

*exemplar, ad quam ipse suam effingeret formaretque philosophiam*; the Theology of Orpheus as his copy and patterne, by which hee formed and fashioned his philosophy. I will ad a word more of the before-cited *Picus*, who thus far  
 5 farther of *Orpheus* in particular<sup>1</sup> sayes: *Secreta de Numeris doctrina, & quicquid magnum sublimèque habuit Græca philosophia, ab Orphei institutis ut a primo fonte manauit*; the mysticall doctrine of Numbers, and what euer the Greeke philosophy had in it great and high, flowed all  
 10 from the Institutions of *Orpheus*, as from their first fount. And of the rest of his ranke and fraternity, those *Sapientiæ patres ac duces*, as *Plato*<sup>2</sup> calls those old excellent Poets, I will conclude in generall with the testimony of, first, the now-mentioned *Plato*, who sayes likewise elsewhere,<sup>3</sup>  
 15 *Nihil aliud sunt quàm deorum interpretes*; they are no other than the Interpreters of the gods: And in another place<sup>4</sup>, that their *præclara poemata non hominum sunt inuenta, sed cælestia munera*, Their excellent Poëms are not the inuentions of men, but gifts and graces of heauen:  
 20 And lastly with *Farra*, the learned *Alexandrian*, who, speaking likewise<sup>5</sup> of the old Poets, sayes, *Their fables are all full of most high Mysteries; and haue in them that splendor that is shed into the fancy and intellect, rauisht and inflamed with diuine fury*: And in the same Treatise makes  
 25 this particular mention of some of them,—and in those times flourished *Linus, Orpheus, Museus, Homer, Hesiod, and all the other most famous of that truly golden age*.

Now to apply this short view we haue taken of these auncient Poets, whether there appeares ought in any our  
 30 students or writers of our times, be they Poets or Philosophers (I put them together, as who are or should be both professors of but one and the same learning, though by the one receiued and deliuered in the apparell of verse, the other of prose), that may in any degree of coherence  
 35 suffer a paralell with either the Inclinations or Abilities of

Sir Tho:  
 Moore,  
 who  
 (among  
 infinite  
 many  
 others)  
 hath volu-  
 minously  
 write his  
 praises.

<sup>1</sup> In *Apo-  
 log.*, fol. 83.

<sup>2</sup> In *Ly-  
 side*.

<sup>3</sup> In *Iöne*.

<sup>4</sup> In *Phæ-  
 dro*.

<sup>5</sup> In *Sette-  
 na.*, fol.  
 320.

Fol. 322.

such as these before mentioned, I wish we could see cause to grant; but rather that there is in them, for ought appeares, no such inclination to the loue or search of any great or high truthes, for the Truthes sake meereely, nor the like neglect of the world and blindnesse to the vanities 5 thereof in respect of it, nor lastly, any fruites from them sauouring of the like Industry, or bearing any shadow scarce of similitude with that of theirs, wee may positiuely affirme, as a truth no lesse obuious to euery mans eye than the lamentable cause and occasion thereof is to euery 10 mans vnderstanding; which is the meane account, or rather contempt and scorne, that in these dayes all vngaining Sciences, & that conduce not immediately to worldly profit or popular eminence, are held in the Poet especially.

*Qual vaghezza di lauro, qual di mirto?*

15

*Pouera e nuda vai filosofia,*

*Dice la turba al vil guadagno intesa.*

Whence it is that much time spent in sollid contemplatiue studies is held vaine and vnnecessary; and these slight flashes of vngrounded fancy (ingenious Nothings & meere 20 imbroideries vpon copwebbs) that the world swarmes with (like sophisticate alchimy gold that will not abide the first touch, yet glitters more in the eye than the sadd, weightyer, true gold) are only laboured for and attended too, because they take best, and most please the corrupt tast and false 25 appetite of the sordid and barbarous times wee liue in. And yet to speake a troth, I cannot herein blame the diseased world so much as I do the infelicity of that sacred Art of Poesy, which, like the soueraigne prescriptions of a *Galen* or *Hypocrates*, ordered and dispensed by illiterate 30 Empyricks or dogleeches, must needes (as the best phisicks ill handled) proue but so much variety of poyson instead of cure. And such are the mont'ibanke Rimers of the time, and so faulty, that haue so much abused their prefession and the world, and stucke so generall a scandall 35

vpon that excellent Physicke of the minde, with the poyson  
of their meritricious flatteries and base seruile fawning at  
the heeles of worldly wealth and greatnesse, as makes it  
abhorred of all men, and most, of those that are of most  
vnderstanding. For indeed what can bee more con-  
temptible, or breed a greater indignation in wise and  
vnderstanding minds, than to see the study of Wisdome  
made not only a mercinary but vitious occupation? And  
that same *pudicam Palladem*, as a wise Author from the  
like resentment aptly saies, *deorum munere inter homines*  
*diuersantem ejci, explodi, exhibilari; Non habere qui amet,*  
*qui faueat, nisi ipsa quasi prostans, & præfloratæ virginitatis*  
*accepta mercedula, maleparatum æs in amatoris arculam*  
*referat.*

2. The second great disparity that I find betweene those  
auncient Fathers of learning and our moderne writers is  
in the price and estimation they held their knowledges  
in: Which appeares in the care they tooke to conceale  
them from the vnworthy vulgar, and which doth no lesse  
commend their wisdome then conclude, by their contrary  
course, our Modernes empty and barren of any thing rare  
and pretious in them; who in all probability would not  
prostitute all they know to the rape and spoile of euery  
illiterate reader, were they not conscious to themselues  
their treasure deserves not many locks to guard it vnder.

But that I may not conclude vpon a *non concessum*,—for  
I remember I haue heard it affirmed, and by some too  
that the time calls Schollers, that the Auncients certainly  
spoke their meanings as plaine as they could, and were  
the honester men for doing so; and there may be more  
birds beside, of the same feather with these,—therefore  
I will in charity speake a word or two for these peoples  
instruction, and in the meane betweene the whining *Heraclyte*  
and ouer-rigid *Democritus* (as much as in me lyes) *comiter*  
*erranti monstrare viam.*

Let such then as are to learne whither to conceale their knowledges was the intent and studied purpose of the Auncient Poets all, and most of the auncient Philosophers also; let such, I say, know that, when in the worlds youth & capabler estate, those old wise *Ægyptian* Priests beganne to search out the Misteries of Nature (which was at first the whole worlds only diuinity), they deuized, to the end to retaine among themselues what they had found, lest it should be abused and vilefied by being deliuered to the vulgar, certaine marks and characters of things, vnder which all the precepts of their wisdome were contained; which markes they called *Hieroglyphicks* or sacred grauings. And more then thus they deliuered little; or what euer it was, yet alwaies *dissimulanter*, and in Enigma's and mysticall riddles, as their following disciples also did. And this prouizo of theirs those Images of *Sphynx* they placed before all their Temples did insinuate, and which they set for admonitions that high and Mysticall matters should by riddles and enigmaticall knotts be kept inuiolate from the prophane Multitude. I will giue instance of one or two of them. The authentike testimony late cited (to other purpose) by mee of *Orpheus* and his learning (viz. That he was one of the *priscae sapientiæ patres*, and that the *Secreta de numeris doctrina* and what euer the Greek Philosophy had in it *Magnum & sublime* did from his Institutions *vt a primo fonte manare*) hath these words immediately following: *Sed qui erat veterum mos philosophorum, ita Orpheus suorum dogmatum mysteria fabularum intexit inuolucris, & poetico velamento dissimulauit; vt si quis legat illos Hymnos nihil subesse credat præter fabellas nugâsque meracissimas*; but as it was the manner of the Auncient Philosophers, so *Orpheus* within the foulds and inuoluements of fables hid the misteries of his doctrine, and dissembled them vnder a poeticke maske, so as who reades those hymnes of his will not beleue any



thing to bee included vnder them but meere tales and trifles. *Homer* likewise, by the same mouth positiuely auerred to haue included, in his two Poems of *Iliads* and *Odisses*, all intellectual contemplation, and which are called  
5 the Sun and Moone of the Earth for the light they beare, as one well notes, before all Learning; and of which *Democritus* speaking, as *Farra* <sup>1</sup> the *Alexandrian* obserues, <sup>1</sup> *In Sette-*  
sayes it was impossible but *Homer*, to haue composed so <sup>na., fol.</sup>  
wonderfull workes, must haue been indued with a diuine and <sup>295.</sup>  
10 inspired nature; who vnder a curious and pleasing vaile of fable hath taught the world how great and excellent the beauty of true wisdom is, no lesse then *Ang. Politianus*, who sayes <sup>2</sup>, *Omnia in his & ab his sunt omnia*; yet what <sup>2</sup> *In Am-*  
appeares, I say, in these workes of *Homer*, to the meere <sup>bra.</sup>  
15 or ignorant reader, at all of doctrine or document, or more than two fictious impossible tales, or lyes of many men that neuer were, and thousands of deeds that neuer were done? Nor lesse cautious than these were most of the Auncient Philosophers also. The diuine *Plato* writing  
20 to a friend of his *de supremis substantijs*,—*Per ænigmata* (sayes he) *dicendum est; ne si epistola fortè ad aliorum peruenerit manus, quæ tibi scribimus, ab alijs intelligantur*; we must write in enigma's and riddles, lest if it come to other hands, what wee write to thee be vnderstood by  
25 others. *Aristotle* of those his books wherein he treates of Supernaturall things, sayes, as *Aulus Gellius* testifies <sup>3</sup>, <sup>3</sup> *In Noct.*  
that they were *editi & non editi*; as much as to say, <sup>Attic.</sup>  
Mystically or enigmatically written; adding farther, *cognobiles ijs tantum erunt qui nos audiunt*, they shall be only  
30 knowne to our hearers or disciples: and this closenesse *Pythagoras* also hauing learned of those his Masters, and taught it his disciples, he was made the Master of Silence; And who, as all the doctrines hee deliuered were (after the manner of the *Hebrewes*, *Ægyptians*, and most auncient  
35 Poets) layd downe in enigmaticall and figuratiue notions,

so one among other of his is this: *Giue not readily thy right hand to euery one*, by which Precept (sayes the profound  
<sup>1</sup> *In lib. de Iamblicus*<sup>1</sup>) that great Master aduertiseth that wee ought  
*Mister.* not to communicate to vnworthy mindes, and not ye  
 practized in the vnderstanding of occulte doctrines, those 5  
 misterious instructions that are only to bee opened (sayes  
 he) and taught to sacred and sublime wits, and such as  
 haue beene a long time exercised and versed in them.

Now, from this meanes that the first auncients vsed  
 of deliuering their knowledges thus among themselues 10  
 by word of mouth; and by successiue reception from them  
 downe to after ages, That Art of mysticall writing by  
 Numbers, wherein they couched vnder a fabulous attire  
 those their verball Instructions, was after called *Scientia*  
*Cabalæ*, or the Science of reception,—*Cabala* among the 15  
*Hebrews* signifying no other than the Latine *receptio*:  
 A learning by the auncients held in high estimation and  
 reuerence, and not without great reason; for if God (as  
<sup>2</sup> *In Apolog*, fol. 115.  
 the excellent *Io : Picus*<sup>2</sup> rehearses) *nihil casu, sed omnia per*  
*suam sapientiam vt in pondere & mensura, ita in numero* 20  
*disposuit*, did nothing by chance, but through his wisdom  
 disposed all things as in weight and measure, so likewise  
 in number; and which taught the ingenious *Saluste* to  
<sup>3</sup> *Sig<sup>r</sup> du Bertas* say<sup>3</sup> that—

*Bertas*  
 in his  
 Columnes.

*Sacred harmony*

25

*And law of Number did accompany*  
*Th' allmighty most, when first his ordinance*  
*Appointed Earth to rest and Heauen to daunce.*

<sup>4</sup> *In Epi- menide.* Well might *Plato*<sup>4</sup> consequently affirme that, among all  
*liberall Arts and contemplatiue Sciences, the chieftest and* 30  
*most diuine was the Scientia numerandi*; and who likewise  
 questioning why Man was the wisest of Animalls, answers  
 himselfe againe, as *Aristotle* in his Problemes obserues,  
*quia numerare nouit*, because hee could number; no lesse  
 than *Auenzoar* the *Babylonian*, whose frequent word by 35

*Albumazars* report, as *Picus Mirandula*<sup>1</sup> notes, was *eum omnia nosse qui nouerat numerare*, that hee knowes all things that knowes numbers: But howsoever an Art thus highly cried vp by the Auncients, Yet a Learning (I say) now more than halfe lost, or at least by such as possesse any limbe of it rather talked of than taught,—*Rabanus*, a great Doctor of the Christian Church, only excepted, who hath writ a particular booke *de Numerorum virtutibus*; by diuerse others, as *Ambrose*, *Nazianzen*, *Origine*, *Augustine*, and many more (as the learned *Io: Picus* at large in his *Apology* shoves), reuerendly mentioned, but neuer published in their writings. And I am fully of opinion (which till I find reason to recant, I will not bee ashamed to owne) that the Ignorance of this Art, and the worlds mayme in the want or not vnderstanding of it, is insinuated in the Poets generally-sung fable of *Orpheus*, whom they faigne to haue recouered his *Euridice* from Hell with his Musick, that is, Truth and Equity from darkenesse of Barbarisme and Ignorance with his profound and excellent Doctrines; but, that in the thicke caliginous way to the vpper-earth, she was lost againe, and remaines lost to vs that read and vnderstand him not, for want meerely of the knowledge of that Art of Numbers that should vnlocke and explaine his Mysticall meanings to vs.

This learning of the *Ægyptians* (thus concealed by them, as I haue shewed) being transferred from them to the *Greekes*, was by them from hand to hand deliuered still in fabulous riddles among them, and thence downe to the *Latines*. Of which beades the ingenious *Ouid* has made a curious and excellent chaine, though perhaps hee vnderstood not their depth, as our wisest Naturalists doubt not to affirme his other Contreymen, *Lucretius*, and that more learned Scholler (I mean Imitater) of *Hesiod*, the singular *Virgil*, did; and which are the sinewes and marrow, no lesse then starres and ornaments of his

incomparable Poems: And still by them, as by their masters before them, preserued with equall care, from the mischief of diuulgation or Prophanation; a vice by the Auncients in generall, no lesse then by *Moses* particularly, in the deliuering of the Law (according to the opinions of 5 the most learned, both Christian Diuines and Jewish Rabines), with singular caution provided against and auoided. Write, said the Angell to *Esdras*<sup>1</sup>, *all these things* 10 *that thou hast seene, in a booke, and hide them, and teach them only to the wise of the people, whose heartes thou knowest* 15 *may comprehend and keep these secrets.* And since I late mentioned that great Secretary of God, *Moses*, to whose sacred pen as we cannot attribute too much, so, that wee may giue the greater reuerence to him, and consequently the greater credit to the authority of those Auncient 15 followers and imitaters of his, or (that I may righter say, and not vnreuerently) those iointrunners with him in the same example of closenesse and care to conceale, I will speake a worde or two of him: And vpon the warrant of greater vnderstandings than my owne, auerre, That it 20 is the firme opinion of all ancient writers, which as an indubitable troth they do all with one mouth confirme, that the full and entire knowledge of all wisdome, both diuine & humane, is included in the five bookes of the *Mosaicke* law,—*dissimulata autem & occultata* (as the 25 excellent *Io: Picus* in his learned<sup>2</sup> exposition vpon him sayes) *in literis ipsis, quibus dictiones legis contextæ sunt*; But hidden and disguised euen in the letters themselues that forme the precepts of the Law. And the same *Picus*, in <sup>3</sup>another discourse of his vpon the bookes of *Moses*, 30 more at large to the same purpose sayes, *Scribunt non modo celebres Hebræorum doctores*, (whom afterwards he names<sup>4</sup>, as *Rabi Eliazar, Rabi Moysis de Ægypto, Rabi Simeon Ben Lagis, Rabi Ismahel, Rabi Iodam, & Rabi Nachinan*), *sed ex nostris quoque Esdras, Hilarius, &* 35

<sup>1</sup> *Lib. 2, ca. 12, ver 37.*

<sup>2</sup> *In Hep-tap.*

<sup>3</sup> *In Apolog., fo. 81.*

<sup>4</sup> *Fo. 116.*

*Origines, Mosem non legem modo, quam quinque exaratam  
 libris posteris reliquit, sed secretiorem quoque, & veram legis  
 enarrationem in monte diuinitus accepisse, Præceptum ei a  
 Deo, vt legem quidem populo publicaret, legis autem interpreta-  
 tionem nec traderet literis nec inuulgaret, sed ipse Iesu Naue  
 tantum; tum ille alijs deinceps sacerdotum primoribus, magna  
 silentij religione reuelaret;* the most renowned and authen-  
 5 tique among the Hebrew Doctors, as *Rabi Eliazar, Rabi  
 Moysis de Ægypto, Rabi Symeon, &c.*, but among ours also  
 10 *Esdras, Hillary, and Origine*, doe write that *Moses* receiued  
 from God vpon the mount not the Law only, which he hath  
 left in fīue bookes exactly deliuered to posterity, but the  
 more hidden also and true explanation of the Law; But  
 with all was warned and commaunded by God, that as he  
 15 should publish the Law to the People, so the interpretation  
 thereof he should neither commit to letters nor diuulge,  
 but he to *Iosua* only, and *Iosua* to the other succeeding  
 primaries among the priests, and that vnder a great religion  
 of secrecy: and concludes, *Et merito quidem; Nam satis erat  
 20 vulgaribus, & per simplicem historiam, nunc Dei potentiam,  
 nunc in improbos iram, in bonos clementiam, in omnes iusti-  
 ciam agnoscere, & per diuina salutariæque praecepta, ad bene  
 beatèque viuendum & cultum relligionis institui; at misteria  
 secretiora, & sub cortice legis rudique verborum prætextu lati-  
 25 tantia altissimæ diuinitatis arcana plebi palam facere, quid  
 erat aliud quàm dare sanctum canibus, & inter porcos spargere  
 margaritas?* and not without great reason, for it was  
 enough for the multitude to be by meerely the simple story  
 taught and made to know, now the Power of God, now his  
 30 Wrath against the wicked, Clemency towards the good, and  
 Iustice to all, and by diuine and wholesome precepts in-  
 structed in the wayes of religion and holy life. But those  
 secreter Mysteries and abstrusities of most high diuinity,  
 hidden and concealed vnder the barke and rude couer of  
 35 the words, to haue diuulged and layd these open to the



vulgar, what had it been other than to giue holy things to dogs, and cast pearles among swine? So he: And this little that I haue heere rehearsed (for in a thing so knowne to all that are knowers, mee thinkes I haue said rather too much than otherwise) shall serue for instance of *Moses* 5 his mysticall manner of writing: Which I haue the rather done for instruction of some ignorant though stiffe opposers of this truth, that I haue lately met with, but chiefly in iustification of those other wise Auncients of his and succeeding times, Poets and Philosophers that were no 10 lesse carefull then *Moses* was, not to giue *Sanctum canibus*, as before said, nor *inter porcos spargere margaritas*.

Now to go about to examine whither it appeares our Modernes (Poets especially, for I will exempt diuerse late prose-writers) haue any the like closenesse as before men- 15 tioned, were a work sure as vaine and vnecessary as it is a truth firme and vnquestionable that they possesse the knowledge of no such mysteries as deserue the vse of any art at all for their concealing.

3. The last and greatest disparity, and wherein about 20 all others the grossest defect and maim appears in our Modernes, and especially Poets, in respect of the Auncients, is their generall ignorance, euen throughout all of them, in any the mysteries and hidden properties of Nature, which as an vnconcerning Inquisition it appeares not in 25 their writings they haue at all troubled their heads with. Poets I said especially, and indeed only, for we haue many Prose-men excellent naturall Philosophers in these late times, and that obserue strictly that closenesse of their wise Masters, the reuerend Auncients: So as now a dayes 30 our Philosophers are all our Poets, or what our Poets should bee, and our Poesies growne to bee little better than fardles of such small ware as those Marchants the French call pedlers carry vp and downe to sell,—whistles, painted rattles, and such like *Bartholomew*-babies; for 35

what other are our common vninstructing fabulous rimes  
 then amusements for fooles and children? But our Rimes,  
 say they, are full of Morall doctrine: be it so: But why  
 not deliuered then in plaine prose, and as openly to euery  
 5 mans vnderstanding as it deserues to be taught and com-  
 monly knowne by euery one? The Auncients, say they,  
 were Authors of Fables, which they sung in measured  
 numbers, as we in imitation of them do. True; but sure  
 enough their meanings were of more high nature, and  
 10 more difficult to be found out, then any booke of Manners  
 wee shall readily meete withall affoordes; else they had  
 not writ them so obscurely, or we should find them out  
 more easily, and make some vse of them; whereas not  
 vnderstanding nor seeking to vnderstand, we make none  
 15 at all. Wee liue in a myste, blind and benighted; and  
 since our first fathers disobedience poysoned himselfe and  
 his posterity, Man is become the imperfectest and most  
 deficient Animall of all the field; for then he lost that  
 Instinct that the Beast retaines; though with him the  
 20 beast, and with it the whole vegetable and generall Terrene  
 nature also suffered, and still groanes vnder the losse of  
 their first purity, occasioned by his fall. What concernes  
 him now so neerely as to attend to the cultiuating or  
 refining, & thereby aduancing of his rationall part, to the  
 25 purchase & regaining of his first lost felicity? And what  
 meanes to conduce to this purchase can there bee, but the  
 knowledge first, and loue next (for none can loue but what  
 hee first knowes) of his Maker, for whose loue and seruice  
 he was only made? And how can this blind, lame, and  
 30 vtterly imperfect Man, with so great a lode to boote of  
 originall and actuall offence vpon his back, hope to  
 approach this supreme altitude and immensity, which

*In quella inaccessibil luce,  
 Quasi in alta caligine s'asconde,*

35 (as an excellent Poetesse<sup>1</sup> describes the inscrutable Beeing

<sup>1</sup> La Sig<sup>ra</sup>  
 Vitto:  
 Colonna.

of God), but by two meanes only : the one, by laying his burden on him that on his Crosse bore the burthen of all our defectes, and interpositions betweene vs and the hope of the vision of his blessed Essence face to face heereafter ; and the other, by carefull searche of him here in this life 5 (according to Saint *Paules* instruction) in his works ; who telles vs<sup>1</sup>, *those inuisible things of God are cleerely seene, being understood by the things that are made*, or by the workes of his blessed hands ? So as betweene these two mayne and only meanes of acquiring here the knowledge 10 and hereafter the vision of him wherein all our present and future hapinesse consists, what middle place (to descend to my former discourse) can these mens Morall Philosophy (trow we) challenge ? which in its first Masters and teachers time, before there was any better diuinity knowne, 15 might well enough pass for a course kind of diuinity, but, howeuer, such a one as (with the leaue of our Poets) needes no fiction to clothe or conceale it in : And therfore vtterly vnfit to bee the Subiect of Poems, since it contains in it but the obuious restraints or impulsions of the Humane 20 Sence and will, to or from what it ynly before-hand, without extrinsicke force or law, feeles and knowes it ought to shunne or imbrace. The other two more remooued and harder lessons do certainly more in the affaire both of soule and body concerne vs. And these, if we be wise 25 enough to loue our selues so well, wee must seeke and take from the hands of their fittest teachers. As, in the first, we need goe no farther (though learned & wise Writers haue made mention, and to high purpose, of a *Theologia Philosophica*, as they call some of the doctrines 30 of the auncient Poets) then to the Doctors and Doctrines of that Church that God dyed to plant, and which shall liue till the worlds death. And for instruction in our next necessary Lesson, to wit, the Misteries of Nature, we must, if we will follow *Plato's* aduice, *inquire of those* (and by them 35

<sup>1</sup> *Rom.*  
cap. 1,  
ver. 20.

be directed) *who lived neerest to the time of the gods*; meaning the old wise Ethnicks, among whom the best Masters were certainly most, if not all of them, Poets, and from whose fires, as I haue formerly touched, the greatest part  
5 of all humane knowledges haue taken their first light. Among these, I say, and not elsewhere, excepting the sacred Old Law only, must we search for the knowledge of the wise and hidden wayes & workings of our great Gods hand-maid, Nature. But alas, who findes or who  
10 seekes now adayes to finde them? Nay, what is more strange, there want not of these learned of our times, that will not bee intreated to admit those excellent Masters of knowledge to meane (if they allow them any meaning) scarce other at all then meerely Morall doctrine.  
15 I haue known Latine and Greeke Interpreters of them in these times, men otherwise of much art, and such as able to render their Authors phrase to the height of their good in our worse language; yet aske the most, as I haue some of them, and I feare they will answere, as one, and  
20 the best, of our Greeke translators hath ingenuously confest to mee, that for more then matter of Morality hee hath discovered little in his Authors meanings. Yet my old good friend, as well as I wish him (and very well I wish him for those parts of Fancy, Industry, and meritorious Ability  
25 that are in him), must pardon mee that I affirme, it is not truer that there euer was such a thing as a *Musæus*, or *Hesiod*, or *Homer*, whom he has taught to speake excellent English, then it is that the least part of the Doctrine (or their wisest expositors abuse mee, and other Ignorants  
30 with mee) that they meant to lay downe in those their wise though impossible fables, was matter of Manners, but chiefly Nature: No lesse then in the rest of those few before, and many after them, whom all Antiquity has cried vp for excellent Poets, and called their works perfect  
35 Poems.

For prooffe of which Truth, wee will first mention two or three of the best of them ; and to omit the multiplicity of less autentike testimonies that all Authors are full of, alledge only the beforecited *Mirandula*, who (speaking of that *Magia naturalis*, or naturall wisdom, or as he defines 5

<sup>1</sup> *In Apo- log. fo. 112.* it<sup>1</sup> *exacta & absoluta cognitio omnium rerum naturalium*, the exact and absolute knowledge of all naturall things, which the Auncients were Masters of) sayes<sup>2</sup> that in that Art, among some others he mentions, *Præstitit Homerus*, Homer excelled, and who, *ut omnes alias sapientias, ita 10 hanc quoque sub sui Vlyxis erroribus dissimulauit*, as all other knowledges, so hath hiddenly layd downe this also in his *Vlysses* his trauailes. As likewise of *Orpheus*<sup>3</sup> :—*Nihil efficacius Hymnis Orphei in naturali Magia, si debita musica, animi intentio, & cæteræ circumstantiæ quas nôrunt sapientes 15 fuerint adhibitæ* ; There is nothing of greater efficacy then the hymnes of *Orpheus* in naturall Magick, if the fitting musick, intention of the minde, and other circumstances which are knowne to the wise, bee considered and applyed.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* And againe<sup>4</sup>,—*that they are of no lesse power in naturall 20 magick, or to the vnderstanding thereof, then the Psalmes of Dauid are in the Caball, or to vnderstand the Cabalisticke Science by.* And lastly, *Zoroaster*, who that he was a possessor likewise of that *absoluta cognitio rerum Naturalium* before mentioned, no lesse then of that *Theologicall Philo- 25 sophy* his expounders find in him, may appeare by that Doctrine of his, in particular, of the *Scala à Tartaro ad primum ignem*, which the learned *Io : Picus* interprets<sup>5</sup>, *Seriem naturarum vniuersi à non gradu materiæ, ad eum qui est super omnem gradum graduatè protensum*, the series or 30 concatenation of vniuersall Natures, from a no degree (as he speakes) of matter, to him that is aboue or beyond all degree graduately extended ; no lesse then by that Attribute in generall giuen him by all the learned of all Ages, viz. that he was one of the greatest, as first, of Naturall 35

<sup>1</sup> *In Apo- log. fo. 112.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid. fo. 80.*

<sup>3</sup> *In Conclus.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *In Conclus.*



Magicians, or Masters of the absolute knowledge of all Nature.

To omit, as I said, the Testimonies of an infinity of other Authors in confirmation of the before-affirmed troth,—who  
 5 knowes not that most, if not all, of those fables in all the rest of the Auncients, of their gods and goddesses especially, with the affinities, entercourses, and commerces betweene themselves and with others, (of which, as *Homer*, that Greeke Oracle, is abundantly full, so the rest, as a *Hesiod*,  
 10 *Linus*, the Master, and *Musæus*, the Scoller of *Orpheus*, and, as we haue said, *Zoroaster* and *Orpheus* himselve, and all those most auncient,—if we may beleeeue their best expounders and relaters of most we haue of them,—made the maine grounds and Subiects of their writings) ;—who  
 15 knowes not, I say, that most, if not all, of those their fables of this kinde, and which haue of all learned, in all ages, been chiefly tearmed Poetick, & fittest matter for Poesy, haue neuer been by any wise expounder made to meane other then meerely the Generation of the Elements, with  
 20 their Vertues and Changes, the Courses of the Starres, with their Powers and Influences, and all the most important Secrets of Nature, hanging necessarily vpon the knowledge of These ; which could not suffer so simple a Relation as the Ethick doctrine requires ; because by  
 25 the vulgarity of Those, much mischief must in all reason ensue, being also of those tenderer things that are soonest profaned and vilefied by their cheapnesse ; & This cannot for the generall benefit of mankinde be among the plainest of lessons too commonly knowne and openly diuulged to  
 30 euery body.

I will not deny but the Auncients mingled much doctrine of Morality (yea, high Diuinity also) with their Naturall Philosophy, as the late mentioned *Zoroaster* first, who hath diuinely sung of the Essence and attributes of God,  
 35 and was, as the learned *Farra* auouches<sup>1</sup>, the first Author

<sup>1</sup> In *Set-tena.*, fo. 57.

of that Religious Philosophy, or Philosophicall Religion, that was after followed & amplified by Mercurius Trismegistus, Orpheus, Aglaophemus, Pythagoras, Eudoxus, Socrates, Plato, &c. And Orpheus next, who, as he writt particular

<sup>1</sup> In Dialog. de Astrol. bookes of Astrology, first (as Lucian<sup>1</sup> tells vs) of any man, 5 as also of diseases and their cures, of the natures and qualities of the Elements, of the force of Loue or agreement in Naturall things, and many more that we read of, besides his Hymnes, which are perhaps the greatest part of what now remaines of him heere among vs; so his 10 expounders likewise find in him that *Theologia Philosophica*, as they call it, which they giue to Zoroaster. Witnesse Pausanias, who reports<sup>2</sup>, *Orpheus multa humanæ politicæque vitæ utilia inuenit; & vniuersam Theologiam primus aperuit, & nefariorum facinorum expiationes excogitauit, &c.* But let vs heare how himselfe<sup>3</sup> sings, and which is by Eusebius Pamphilus in his honour rehearsed<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> In Bæotic.

<sup>3</sup> In Lib. de verbo sacro.

<sup>4</sup> Lib. 13. de Præp. Euangel.

O you that vertue follow, to my sense  
Bend your attentiu minds; Prophane ones, hence!  
And thou Musæus, who alone the shine 20  
Highly contemplat'st of the formes diuine,  
Learne my notes, which with th' inward eye behold,  
And vntouch'd in thy sacred bosome hold.  
Incline thee by my safe-aduizing verse  
To the high Author of this Vniuerse. 25  
One only, all immortall, such is he,  
Whose Being I discover thus to thee:  
This alone-perfect, this eternall King  
Rais'd aboue all, created eu'ry thing,  
And all things gouernes, with the Spirit alone 30  
(Not otherwise) to be beheld or knowne.  
From him no ill springs; there's no god but he:  
Thinke now, and looke about thee prudently;  
And better to discover him, loe, I  
His tracts and footsteps vpon earth and high 35  
Strong hand behold, but cannot him descrie,  
Who (to an vnimaginable height  
Rais'd) in darke clouds conceales him from my sight.

Only a Caldean<sup>1</sup> saw him, and the grace  
 Hath now aloft to view him face to face.  
 His sacred right hand graspes the Ocean, and,  
 Touch'd with it, the proud mountaines trembling stand,  
 5 Eu'n from the deep rootes to their vtmost height;  
 Nor feeles at all th' immensnesse of their weight,  
 He who aboue the heau'n doth dwell, yet guides  
 And gouernes all that vnder heau'n abides.  
 O're all, through all, doth his vast power extend;  
 10 Of th' Vniuerse beginning, midds, & end.

<sup>1</sup> Meaning  
 sure  
 Moses, who  
 the holy  
 writ saies  
 Saw God  
 face to face,  
 vnlesse  
 with  
 Eusebius  
 we will  
 haue him  
 meane the  
 Patriarke  
 Abraham.

And as these two diuine Authors in particular, so likewise among the rest of the Auncient Poets in generall, I will graunt they haue in their Poesies, as I haue said, mingled much Morality with their Ethick doctrines: As  
 15 in their *Hercules*, *Theseus*, *Vlysses*, *Æneas*, and other their Heröes they haue giuen example of all vertues, and punisht all vices, as pride and ambition, in their *Giants* and *Titanes*, &c., Contempt of the gods in *Niobe*, *Arachne*, *Casseiope*, *Medusa*, *Amphion*, *Marsyas*, the *Mineides*, &c.,  
 20 murder, lust, couetise, and the rest, in their *Lycaon*, *Ixion*, *Sisyphus*, *Midas*, *Tantalus*, *Titius*, &c. Yet questionlesse infinite many more of their fables then these, (though euen these and the rest of this kind want not among our best Mythologians their Physick as well as Ethick meanings), as  
 25 all those of their gods and goddesses, with their powers and dignities, and all passage of affinity and commerce betweene themselues, and betweene them and others, were (as I haue said before) made to meane meere matter of Nature, and in no possibility of Sense to bee wrested to  
 30 the doctrine of Manners, vnlesse a man will withall bee so inhumane as to allow all those riotts, rapes, murders, adulteries, incestes, and those *nefaria* and *nefanda*, vn-naturally-seeming vices that they tell of them, to bee, litterally or Morally taken, fit examples of Manners or  
 35 wholesome instructions for the liues of men to be leuelled and directed by.

Whereas, on the contrary side (that I may instance some of them), who can make that Rape of *Proserpine*,—whom her mother *Ceres* (that vnder the Species of Corne might include as well the whole Genus of the Vegetable nature) sought so long for in the earth,—to meane other 5 then the putrefaction and succeeding generation of the Seedes we commit to *Pluto*, or the earth, whome they make the God of wealth, calling him also *Dis quasi diues* (the same in Latine that *Pluto* is in Greeke), rich or wealthy, because all things haue their originall from the 10 earth, and returne to the earth againe? Or what can *Iupiters* blasting of his beloued *Semele*, after his hauing defloured her, and the wrapping of his sonne he got on her (*Bacchus* or wine) in his thigh after his production, meane other then the necessity of the Ayres heate to his 15 birth in the generation, and (after a violent pressure and dilaceration of his mother the Grape) the like close imprisoning of him also, in a fit vessell, till he gaine his full maturity and come to be fit aliment?

After these two particular scandalous fables, and which 20 I will call but inferiour speculations, yet necessary documents, because of the Natures of Corne and Wine, the *Sustentacula vitæ*: To omit the adultery of *Mars* and *Venus*, by which the Chymists will haue meant the inseperability of those two Metals that carry their names 25 (witnessse that exuberance of *Venus*, or copper, which wee call *Vitriole*, that is seldome or neuer found without some mixture more or lesse of *Mars*, or iron, in it, as her husband *Vulcan*, or materiall fire, findes and shewes the practitioners in Chymistry): And with this, other also 30 of the like obuiouser kinde of truths in Nature, as *Hebe's* stumbling and falling with the Nectar-bowle in her hand, and thereby discovering her hidden parts to the gods, as she serued them at their boord, meaning the nakednesse of the trees and plants in Autumne, when all their leaues 35

are false from them by the downfall or departure of the *Spring*, which their *Hebe* (or goddess of youth, as the Ancients called her, because the Spring renews and makes young all things) means: And with these, the Incest of  
 5 *Mirrha* with her father, meaning the Myrrh-tree, which the Sun, father of Plants, inflames, and making ouvertures in it, there flows thence that odorous *Sabæan* gumme we call Myrrhe, (meant by her child *Adonis*, which interpreted is sweet, pleasant, or delightfull): To omit, I say, these and  
 10 the like triuialler, though true, obseruations in Nature, and that carry also so foule a face to the eye, I would aske who can make those fights and contentions that the wise *Homer* faignes betweene his Gods and Goddesses to meane other then the naturall Contrariety of the Elements, and especially  
 15 of the Fire and Water, which as they are tempered and reconciled by the aire, so *Iuno* (which signifies the æry region) reconciles & accords the warring Gods? and next, what in generall those frequent and no lesse scandalous brawles betweene *Iupiter* and his wife and sister, *Iuno*,  
 20 can be made to meane other then those meteors occasioned by the vpper and lower Region of the Ayres differing temperatures? Or what all those his vnlawfull loues, his compressing so many *Dryads*, *Nayads*, and *Nereiads* (wood-nymphes and waternymphes) and the rest, can meane  
 25 other then meerely the Fires power vpon the Earth and waters (a study of a higher nature and vaster extente then the first alledged), and which *Iupiters* Incest with his sister *Ceres* likewise means, and is the same with the tale of the contention of *Phæton*, which is *Incendium*, with  
 30 the sonne of *Isis*, which is *Terra*?

A Theame too infinite to pursue, and no lesse a fault heere then perhaps a folly at all to mention: For (besides the beeing a subiect vtterly vnfit to suffer a mixture with a discourse of so light a nature as this of mine, where  
 35 a slight touch at the generall mistake and abuse of Poesy



in our times was only intended) suppose a man should (wheras I haue heere layd downe the faire sense of but two or three of the foulest of them) be at the paines of running through all the Fables of the Auncients, and out of them shew the reader, and leade him by the fingar as it were (who yet can discouer nothing but matter of Manners in them) to the speculation of the entire Secret of our great God of Nature, in his miraculous fabrick of this World,—which their God *Pan*, or the vniuersall simple bodyes and seedes of all Nature, gotten by *Mercury*, or the diuine Will, by which all things came to bee created meanes,—And, beginning with *Moses*, shew him how the Spirit of God first moouing vpon the waters (a Mystery perhaps by few of our duller Modernes vnderstood, though a *Thales Milesius*, or *Heraclius* the Ephesian, two Hea-  
 thens, could instruct them), they faigne him vnder the name of *Iupiter*, by compressing *Latona* (meaning the shades or darkenesse of the first *Chāos*) to haue begot on her *Apollo* and *Diana*, which is the Sun and Moone, when he said, *fiat lux & lux fuit*, and carry him along from this beginning to the end and compleate knowledge of all Nature (which, as *Moses* darkely, they no lesse darkely deliuered),—Suppose, I say, a man should take this taske vpon him, I would faine know who they are that would be perhaps, at least that were fit readers now a dayes of such a Treatise? Because what one of a million of our Scollers or writers among vs vnderstands, or cares to be made vnderstand, scarce the lowest and triuiallest of Natures wayes, much lesse seekes to draw (by wisely obseruing her higher and more hidden workings) any profitabler vse or benefit from them, for their owne, or the publike good, then perhaps to make an Almanack or a diuing-bote to take butts or crabs vnder water with, or else some Douch water-bellowses, by rarefying water into a comprest ayre to blow the fire withall?

Whenas if they could but from that poore step learne the way to get a little higher vp the right scale of Nature, and really indeed accord and make a firme peace and agreement betweene all the discordant Elements, and (as  
5 the Fable of *Cupids* wrassele with *Pan* and ouercomming him teaches them the beginning of all Natures productions are loue and strife) indeauour to irritate, also, and force this *Pan*, or Simple Matter of things, to his fit procreatiue ability, by an industrious and wise strife and  
10 colluctation with him ; then they might perhaps do somewhat in Philosophy not vnworth the talking of: No lesse then our common practitioners in Physick might better deserue their names then most of them do (for to be a Physitian what is it but to be a generall Naturalist, not  
15 meere transcriber and applyer of particular booke-*recipes* ?) ; if they would but practise by that Rule and Base of Nature the world was built vpon, to make likewise and establish that Equality and concord betweene those warring Elements (which are the Complexions) in  
20 Mans body, that one exceed not another in their Qualities: Or if they could but giue better instance of their acquaintance with the wayes of Phylosophy then in burdning and oppressing nature, rather then otherwise, as most of them doe with their crude Vegetable and Minerall  
25 Physicks, for not vnderstanding the necessity (or though they did, yet not the Art) of exalting and bettering their natures by correcting or remoouing their in-bred imperfections, with that fit preparation that Nature teaches them.

30 The hidden workings of which wise Mistresse could wee fully in all her wayes comprehend, how much would it cleare, and how infinitely ennoble our blind and groueling conditions, by exalting our vnderstandings to the sight (as I haue before toucht) of God, or *those in-*  
35 *uisible things of God* (to vse S. *Pauls* words once againe)

which are cleerely seene, being vnderstood by the things that are made; and thence instructing vs, not sawcily to leap, but by the linkes of that golden chaine of *Homer*, that reaches from the foote of *Iupiters* throne to the Earthe, more knowingly and consequently more humbly climbe 5 vp to him, who ought to bee indeed the only end and period of all our knowledge and vnderstanding; the which in vs, though but a small fainte beame of that our great blessed *Sun*, yet is that breath of life that he breathed into vs, to draw us thereby (*fecisti nos Domine* 10 *propter te*, sayes the holy S. *Augustine*<sup>1</sup>) neerer to him then all irrationall Animalls of his making, as a no lesse tenderly louing Father then immense and omnipotent Creator!

<sup>1</sup> In Confess.

To whom, as wee cannot giue too much loue and 15 reuerence, so neither can wee with too wary hands approach his sacred Mysteries in Holy Writ. Howbeit, I must (to retorne home to my former discourse) in honour & iust praise of the before mentioned wise Auncients (and with the premised befitting caution) not doubt to say 20 that as his Instructions in the holy Scripture, and especially in the old Law, must of necessity reach as far farther then the bare historicall trueth (though not in the same manner) as extends the difference in our selues betweene Nature alone, and Nature and Grace vnited; so 25 likewise, that one and a great portion of the doctrine of that part of holy Writ the wise Ethnicks vndoubtedly possess in all perfection, to wit, the knowledge of all Natures most high and hidden wayes and workings; and though far short, in the safer part of wisdom, of their 30 more inlightned successors, yet was the bare light, or rather fire, of nature in them, enough to draw them as high as Reason could help flesh and bloud to reach heauen with. Nay, which is more, were it not wide of my purpose, though it contradicts it not, to conster them 35

other then meere children of Nature, I might perhaps  
 gaine fauour of some of our weaker persuaders in their  
 spirituall Cures (if to flanke and strengthen the diuine  
 letter with prophaner Authorities be in this backward  
 5 and incredulous age not irrequisite) by paralelling, in the  
 Historicall part I meane chiefly, and as it lies, the Sacred  
 letter and Ethnick Poesyes together to a large extention :  
 And beginning with *Moses*, shew them all those *dij*  
*maiorum gentium* from *Saturne* to *Deucalions* deluge were  
 10 but names for *Adam*, *Caine*, *Lamech*, and the rest of their  
 successors to *Noahs* floud : Nor that their *Rhea* (or *Terra*,  
 mother of all the Gods) and *Venus* could be other then  
*Moses* his *Eua* and *Noema*. What other can *Hesiod's*<sup>1</sup> *Pandora*,  
 the first and beautifullest of all women, by whome  
 15 all euils were dispersed and spred vpon the earth, meane  
 then *Moses* his *Eue*? What can *Homers Ate*, whom he  
 calls<sup>2</sup> the first daughter of *Iupiter*, and a woman pernicious  
 and harmefull to all vs mortalls, and in another place<sup>19</sup>  
 tells how the wisest of men was cosened and deceiued  
 20 by his wife ; what can he, I say, meane in these women  
 but *Eue*? What was the Poets *Bacchus* but his *Noah*, or  
*Noachus*, first corrupted to *Boachus*, and after, by re-  
 moouing a letter, to *Bacchus*, who (as *Moses* tels vs of  
*Noah*) was the first likewise in their accompt that planted  
 25 the vine and taught men the vse of wines soone after  
 the vniuersall deluge? What can be plainer then that by  
 their *Ianus* they ment *Noah* also, whome they giue two  
 faces to, for hauing seene both the old and new world ;  
 and which his name (in *Hebrew*, *Iain*, or wine) likewise  
 30 confirms,—*Noah* being (as we late alledged *Moses* for  
 witnesse) the first inuentor of the vse of wines? What  
 could they meane by their *Golden-Age*, when

*Nulli subigebant arua coloni,  
 Ipsaque tellus*

*Omnia liberius nullo poscente ferebat,*

<sup>1</sup> Lib. 1.  
 Oper. &  
 diu.

<sup>2</sup> Iliad. lib.

<sup>19</sup>

But the state of Man before his Sin? and consequently, by their Iron age, but the worlds infelicity and miseries that succeeded his fall? when

*Luctus & ultrices posuere cubilia curæ;  
Pallentesque habitant morbi, tristisque senectus,  
Et metus & malesuada fames, & turpis egestas.*

5

Lastly (for I haue too much already exceeded my commission), what can *Adonis horti* among the Poets meane other then *Moses* his *Eden*, or terrestiall Paradise,—the Hebrew *Eden* being *Voluptas* or *Delitiæ*, whence the <sup>10</sup> Greeke ἡδονή, or pleasure, seemes necessarily deriued? The *Caldæans* and *Persians*, so I am tould, called it *Pardeis*, the Greeks παράδεισος, the *Latines* altered the Greeke name to *Paradisus*, which as *Eden* is (as <sup>1</sup> *Aulus Gellius* defines it) *Locus amænissimus & voluptatis plenissimus*, <sup>15</sup> the which selfe thing the auncient both Poets and Philosophers certainly ment by their *horti Hesperidum* likewise.

<sup>1</sup> In *Noc. Attic.*

Now though we reuerence *Moses* more (as we ought to doe) then these his condisciples, because inspired so far <sup>20</sup> aboue them with the immediate spirit of Almighty God, yet ought we neuerthelesse to reuerence them and the wisdom of their fables, howeuer not vnderstood by euery body: his condisciples I call them, because they read bothe vnder their *Ægyptian* teachers one lesson, & were <sup>25</sup> (as *Moses* of himselfe sayes) expert in the learning of the *Ægyptians*; yea, many of them (and Poets all) were, to speake fitlyer, the teachers of that Learning themselues, and Masters therein no lesse then *Moses*. How can We then indeed attribute too much to their knowledges, though <sup>30</sup> deliuered out of wise consideration in riddles and fictitious tales?

But alas (with shame enough may we speake it), so far are we now adayes from giuing the due to them they deserue, as those their learned and excellent fables seeme <sup>35</sup>



rather read to be abused then studyed in these times, and euen by people too that are, or would be accompted, profound men.

What child of learning or louer of Truth could abide  
 5 to see great pretenders to learning among vs, that doubt, and obstinately too, whether the precious treasure of that wisdom of the Auncients,—so carefully by them left sealed vp to the use of their true Heires, the wise and worthy of their posterity,—be any more indeed then  
 10 a legacy of meere old wiues tales to poyson the world with? If we will call this but ignorance, let vs go farther, and suppose that a man, nor vnlearned one neither, shall haue taken paines in foure or fiue fables of the Auncients to vnfold and deliuer vs much doctrine and high mean-  
 15 ings in them, which he calls their wisdom; and yet the same man in an other Treatise of his shall say of those auncient Fables, *I thinke they were first made, and their expositions deuised afterward*, and a little after, *Of Homer himselfe, notwithstanding he was made a kind of Scripture*  
 20 *by the latter Scooles of the Græcians, yet I should without any difficulty pronounce his fables had in his owne meaning no such inwardnesse, &c.* What shall we make of such willing contradictions, when a man to vent a few fancies of his owne shall tell vs first, they are the wisdom of the  
 25 Auncients, and next, that those Auncient fables were but meere fables, and without wisdom or meaning til their expositours gaue them a meaning; & then scornefully and contemptuously (as if all Poetry were but Play-vanity) shut vp that discourse of his of Poetry with *It is not good to*  
 30 *stay too long in the Theater.*

But let me not stick too long neither in this myre, nor seeme ouer-sensible of wrong to what can suffer none, for *Veritas*, sayes the holy writ, *magna est, & præualebit*; and such are (nor lesse great and preuailing then truth it selfe)  
 35 those before mentioned *Arcana* of our wise Auncients,

which no Barbarisme I know can efface, nor all the dampes and thick fogs by dull & durty Ignorance breathed on them darken at all, or hide from the quick eye of select and happier vnderstandings, who know full well the ripest fruites of knowledge grow euer highest, while the 5 lower-hanging boughs (for euery ones gripe) are either barren, or their fruite too sowre to be worth the gathering. And among such may they euer rest, safe wrapt vp in their huskes and inuoluements: And let our writers write, if it can bee no better, and Rimers rime still after 10 their accustomed and most accepted manner, and still captiuate and rauish their like hearers. Though in my owne inclination, I could with much iuster alacrety then in person of the *Roman* poet, with his *Vilia miretur vulgus*, or *Roman* Orator, with his *Similes habent sua labra lactucas* 15 (while he laught to see a greedy Asse at his sutable thistles), wish we might, each one according to the measure of his illumination, and by the direction of Gods two great bookes, that of his law first and that of the Creature next (wherein, to vse the excellent *Io: Picus* his 20 phrase,<sup>1</sup> *leguntur magnalia Dei*, the wonderfull things of God are read) run on together in a safe and firme rode of Trueth, to the end that, vindicating some part of our lost Heritage and Beatitude heere, we may thence (an aduantage the holy *Maximus Tyrius*<sup>2</sup> sayes the more 25 happy spirits haue ouer others) arriue the lesse Aliens and strangers in the Land of our eternall Heritage and Beatitude heereafter.

<sup>1</sup> In Con-  
clus.

<sup>2</sup> In Ser-  
mon.

## APPENDIX

THE before-written Treatise of the dignity of the ould Poets and their Poesies falling into the view of some not iniudicious eyes, Among them there arose question, how it could be that *Plato*, so great a louer and honorer of the  
 5 Auncient Poets in generall, and of *Homer* (one of the best of them) in particular, should exclude and banish him neuerthesse out of his *Common-wealth*: To which is easily and briefly answered, that, as there is no Citty, corporation, or common-wealth in the world, but differs  
 10 from all others, if not in all, at least in some particular lawes, institutions, or customes, so most reasonable is it that such a Common-wealth as *Plato* formes should more then any other be differing from all others in new Lawes, rules, and institutions: His intention being to frame an  
 15 assembly of men, or republike, which, consisting onely of Reason, was rather the *Idæa* of what a perfect common-wealth should be then as eyther being or easy or possible to bee put into Act. Hee formes all his Cittizens diuine, heroique, and perfectly Philosophick and wise spirits, and  
 20 such as are already arriued to the summe of all intellectuall height and perfection of vertue and Sapience; And therefore can haue no need of a *Homer* or his instructions to shew them the way to bee, or make them what they are already made. In all other Common-wealthes the case is  
 25 differing, where *Homers*, *Hesiodes*, *Orpheusses*, and those Fathers of knowledge and learning are euer necessary to allure with the sweetnesse and pleasure of their fictions the mindes of men to the loue and knowledge of vertue and wisdom: So as, out of this respect meerly, and not  
 30 that he was at all the lesse worthy of honour and admiration in his fit place of vse, was *Homer* exempt and shut out from *Plato's* imaginary assembly and excellent republike. And therefore I will conclude with *Maximus Tyrius*, who sayes (as *Farra Alexandrinus* obserues<sup>1</sup>): <sup>1</sup> *In Sette-*  
 35 *We ought to giue honour to Plato, but yet so as we rob not nar. the great Homer, nor scante him of his due and deserued prayses.*

# SIR WILLIAM ALEXANDER, EARL OF STIRLING

*ANACRISIS, OR A CENSURE OF SOME POETS  
ANCIENT AND MODERN*

1634?

*'To my much honoured Friend, Mr. William  
Drummond of Hawthornden.'*

SIR,

I Would have this Piece appear to the World with  
your Name, as well for a Testimony to After-times <sup>5</sup>  
of our Friendship and Love, as for that, to my Knowledge,  
there is not any in our Northern Country who hath more  
diligently perused the Authors cited in this Censure, and  
who can so universally discern of every of them in their  
own Language, as your self. My daily Cares at Court <sup>10</sup>  
and Employments in Matters of the State have not  
granted me Leisure to set the last Hand unto it: Neither  
have I went so through all but that you, if you please,  
in that Solitariness and Leisure which you enjoy, may  
proceed and spend some flying Hours upon this same <sup>15</sup>  
Subject. And, I am assured, our Pieces cannot but with  
Applause and Contentment be read and embraced by the  
thankful Posterity, who after Death will render to every  
Man what is his due.

*Your loving Friend  
and Brother,  
Stirling.*

## ANACRISIS:

OR,

A Censure of some Poets Ancient and  
Modern.

AFTER a great Travel both of Body and of Mind,  
 which (since not voluntary but imposed upon me)  
 was the more painful, by retiring for a Time where I was  
 born, of late, gladly embracing this rarely offered Oppor-  
 5 tunity to refresh my self, and being curious, as the most  
 dainty Kind of Pleasure for such as are capable of their  
 Delicacies, to recreate my self with the Muses,—I may  
 justly say recreate, since they create new Spirits, which  
 shaking off gross Affections, diving into the Depths,  
 10 reaching the Heights, and contemplating both, are trans-  
 ported with these Things which are only worthy to  
 Entertain so noble a Thing as the Mind of Man,—I  
 began to renew my Acquaintance there, having of a long  
 Time been a Stranger with them; so that at the first  
 15 I could not begin to practise as one of their ordinary  
 Train, but only to court with these whose Credit might  
 procure my Access. I conversed with some of the Modern  
 as well as with the Ancients, kindling my Fire at those  
 Fires which do still burn out of the Ashes of ancient  
 20 Authors, to whom I find them no Way inferior, though  
 like affectioned Patriots, by writing in the vulgar Tongues,  
 seeking to grace their own Country. I have pitied the  
 Ignorance of some who might be admitted for Versifiers  
 and Poets, that would extol as an excellent Piece of  
 25 Poesy that which, wanting Life, had nothing but Language,  
 masking Ignorance with *Greek* and *Latin*, whose Treasure  
 long feeding upon, they had by Time digested, and



converted to their own Use, though venting it but in Excrements.

Language is but the Apparel of Poesy, which may give Beauty, but not Strength: And when I censure any Poet, I first dissolve the general Contexture of his Work in several Pieces, to see what Sinews it hath, and to mark what will remain behind, when that external Gorgeousness, consisting in the Choice or Placing of Words, as if it would bribe the Ear to corrupt the Judgment, is first removed, or at least only marshalled in its own Degree. I value Language as a Conduit, the Variety thereof to several Shapes, and adorned Truth or witty Inventions that which it should deliver. I compare a Poem to a Garden, the disposing of the Parts of the one to the several Walks of the other: The Decorum kept in Descriptions, and representing of Persons, to the Proportions and Distances to be observed in such Things as are planted therein, and the Variety of Invention to the Diversity of Flowers thereof; whereof Three Sorts do chiefly please me: A grave Sentence, by which the Judgment may be bettered; a witty Conceit, which doth harmoniously delight the Spirits; and a generous Rapture expressing Magnanimity, whereby the Mind may be inflamed for great Things. All the rest, for the most Part, is but a naked Narration or gross Staff to uphold the general Frame, yet the more apt, if well contrived and eloquently delivered, to angle vulgar Readers, who perchance can scarce conceive the other.

I condemn their Opinions, who, as they would include all Perfection in one, do prefer someone with whom they sympathize, or whom they have most practised, to all others. There is none singular in all, and yet all are singular in some Things. There is none so excellent that is not excelled in some Pieces by some others, and every one hath his own particular Grace, none being

positively but only comparatively to be praised, and that for Parts, not in the whole; Men's Works, like themselves, not being all of one Quality, nor ever alike.

I like the Phrase, Stile, Method and discreet Carriage  
 5 of *Virgil*; the Vigour and Variety of Invention in *Ovid*;  
 the deep Judgement and grave Sentences of *Horace* and  
*Juvenal*; the Heroical Conceptions, showing an innate  
 Generosity, in *Statius Papinianus* and *Lucan*: And I  
 cannot wonder enough at that Man (deservedly renowned  
 10 and admirably learned) who with a passionate Kind of  
 Partiality (the more strange that it is against dead Men  
 who have exceeded Envy, having their just Value set  
 upon them by sundry Ages) would advisedly vilify *Lucan*  
 in so extreme a Measure, saying, *Videtur potius latrare*  
 15 *quam canere*, whom *Statius Papinianus* and *Martial* (his  
 Superiours in Poesy) both celebrating his Birth by eternal  
 Testimonies, have magnified so much:

*Hæc est illa dies, quæ magni conscia partus*  
*Lucanum populis et tibi, Polla, dedit.*

20 And thereafter,

*Vatis Apollinei magno memorabilis ortu*  
*Lux redit, Aonidum turba favete sacris.*  
*Hæc meruit, cum te terris, Lucane, dedisset,*  
*Mixtus Castaliæ Bætis ut esset aquæ.*

25 *Julius Scaliger* doth aggravate much any Hyperbole, where-  
 in he hath seemed to exceed, and hath not remarked, at least  
 will not remember, the unmatchable Height of his Ravishing  
 Conceits to provoke Magnanimity. If he had as narrowly  
 sifted *Virgil*, whom he will needs justify as without any  
 30 Blemish, without reposing as by an implicate Faith upon  
 his Sufficiency, he would have found an Error in him  
 more gross than any that is in *Lucan*; as this, where  
 the Praise of an *Epick* Poem is to feign a Person exceed-  
 ing Nature, not such as all ordinarily be, but with all the

Perfections whereof a Man can be capable; every Deficiency in that imaginary Man being really the Author's own, whose unlimited Invention, for Lack of Judgment, could reach to no greater Height: He (seeking to extol the Valour of *Æneas*, which only could be done by the 5 Valour of some valorous Enemy whom he had vanquished) doth so extreamly extenuate the Courage of *Turnus* at his Death, leaving him no Time to recover it, that where out of a Poetick Liberty he should have afforded more than was ordinary, wanting nothing but Fortune, and at 10 least inferiour to none but to him whom he would grace with his Ruin, he doth make him die like a Dastard, casting thereby down all the Glory intended for *Æneas*, overcoming but a Coward; and in a more abject Manner than the lowest minded Man could have descended to 15 conceive, burdening the Gods with his Cowardice, whose Mind, in whatsoever State his Body was, should have continued free, not basely begging his Life.

*Ille humilis supplexque oculos dextramque precantem  
Protendens, equidem merui, nec deprecor, inquit. 20  
Utere sorte tua; Miseri te si qua Parentis  
Tangere cura potest, oro (fuit & tibi talis  
Anchises genitor) Dauni miserere senectæ;  
Et me, seu corpus spoliatum lumine mavis,  
Redde meis: Vicisti, tua est Lavinia conjux. 25*

Thus would he unworthily ransom his Life with Loss of his Honour and of his Lady. And I never read that Part of *Virgil* but I remember the Speech of *Paulus Æmilius*, when *Perseus*, King of *Macedon*, came with Tears a Suiter to him, that he might not be led in Triumph: 30 *Fy upon you, Beast*, said he, *you beg that which you ought to give unto your self, and hath disgraced my Victory, who now, after all my Travels, can have no Credit, having only overcome such a base Coward as was not worthy to have been contended with.* If I have been too bold in censuring 35

*Julius Scaliger*, let me be excused by his Example in censuring all his Betters ; and it is only to give *Lucan* his Due, not to derogate from him.

There is no Man doth satisfy me more than that notable  
5 *Italian*, *Torquato Tasso*, in whom I find no Blemish but that he doth make *Solyman*, by whose Overthrow he would grace *Rinaldo*, to die fearfully, belying the Part that he would have Personated during his Life, as if he would choose rather to err in imitating others than to  
10 prove singular by himself. *Speron Speron*, thinking his exquisite Work of *Godfred* to be too full of rich Conceits, and more dainty than did become the Gravity of such a Work, said, That it was a Heroick Poem written in *Madrigals* ; and yet, when he wrote a Week of the  
15 Creation, in Emulation of *Du Bartas*, it did no way approach to the Perfections of the other ; which doth confirm me in my first Opinion, That every Author hath his own Genius, directing him by a secret Inspiration to that wherein he may most excell, and, as I said, excelling  
20 in some Things, and none in all.

Many would bound the boundless Liberty of a Poet, binding him only to the Birth of his own Brains, affirming that there can be no Perfection but in a Fiction, not considering that the Ancients, upon whose Example they  
25 ground their Opinion, did give Faith unto those Fables, whereby they would abuse our Credulity, not only as to true History but as to true Divinity, since containing the Greatness of their Gods and Grounds of their Religion, which they in their own Kind did strive superstitiously  
30 to extol ; so that hereby they would either make our Religion or our Affection thereunto Inferior unto theirs, and imaginary Matters to be more celebrated than true Deeds, whose envied Price, affectionately looked upon, must beget a generous Emulation in any Virtuous Reader's  
35 Mind.

The Treasures of Poesie cannot be better bestowed than upon the apparelling of Truth, and Truth cannot be better apparell'd to please young Lovers than with the Excellencies of Poesy. I would allow that an Epick Poem should consist altogether of a Fiction, that the Poet, 5 soaring above the Course of Nature, making the Beauty of Virtue to invite and the Horrour of Vice to affright the Beholders, may liberally furnish his imaginary Man with all the Qualities requisite for the accomplishing of a perfect Creature, having Power to dispose of all Things 10 at his own Pleasure.

But it is more agreeable with the Gravity of a Tragedy that it be grounded upon a true History, where the Greatness of a Known Person, urging Regard, doth work the more powerfully upon the Affections. As for 15 the Satyrist and Epigrammatist, they may mix both the Two, who shadowing Truth with Fables, and discovering true Persons with feigned Names, may, by alluding to Antiquity, tax the modern Times. I have heard some with a pretended Theological Austerity condemn the 20 Reading of Fictions, as only breathing a contagious Dissoluteness to impoison the Spirits, where such Works must be acknowledged as the chief Springs of Learning, both for Profit and Pleasure, showing Things as they should be, where Histories represent them as they are, 25 many times making Vice to prosper and Virtue to prove miserable: I like not the *Alexander* of *Curtius* so well as the *Cyrus* of *Xenophon*, who made it first appear unto the World with what Grace and Spirit a Poem might be delivered in Prose. 30

The *Æthiopian* History of *Heliodorus*, though far inferiour to that for the Weight and State of the Matter, as fitted to instruct Greatness, yet above it for the Delicacy of the Invention and Variety of Accidents, strange yet possible, leading the curious Reader by a 35



baited Appetite, with a methodical Intricateness, through a Labyrinth of Labours, entertaining his Expectation till he come unto the End, which he must seek that he may understand the Beginning : A Work whereof the Author, though he had Loss thereby, being a Bishop, needed not to be ashamed, his chief Person doing nothing that was not worthy to be imitated. But I confess that the *Arcadia* of S. P. *Sidney* (either being considered in the whole or in several Lineaments) is the most excellent Work that, in my Judgment, hath been written in any Language that I understand, affording many exquisite Types of Perfection for both the Sexes ; leaving the Gifts of Nature, whose Value doth depend upon the Beholders, wanting no Virtue whereof a Humane Mind could be capable : As for Men, Magnanimity, Carriage, Courtesy, Valour, Judgment, Discretion ; and in Women, Modesty, Shamefastness, Constancy, Continency, still accompanied with a tender sense of Honour. And his chief Persons being Eminent for some singular Virtue, and yet all Virtues being united in every one of them, Men equally excelling both for Martial Exercise and for Courtly Recreations, showing the Author, as he was indeed, alike well versed both in Learning and Arms. It was a great Loss to Posterity that his untimely Death did prevent the Accomplishing of that excellent Work.

Long since, being young, I adventured a Piece with him, beginning at the very half Sentence where he left with the Combat between *Zelmane* and *Anaxius*, and continuing till the Ladies were returned to their Father, intending further, if I had not been otherways diverted, meerly out of my Love to the Author's Memory, which I celebrated under the Name of *Philsides* ; intending to have altered all that followed after my Addition, having conformed my self only to that which went before ; and though being there but an Imitator, I could not really

give the Principall it self, but only as it were the Pourtrait, and that done by too gross a Pencil, *Non cuivis homini contingit adire Corinthum*. It were enough to be excellent by being Second to *Sidney*, since who ever could be that, behoved to be before others.

This Kind of Invention in Prose hath been attempted by sundry in the Vulgar Languages, as (leaving as not worthy to be named here those ridiculous Works composed of Impossibilities, and considering the best) *Sanazarius's Arcadia* in *Italian*, *Diana de Montemajor* in *Spanish*, *Astrea* 5 in *French*, whose Authors being all of excellent Wits, in a Bucolick Strain disguising such Passions of Love as they suffered or devised under the Persons of Shepherds, were bound by the Decorum of that which they profess'd to keep so low a Course, that though their Spirits could 10 have reach'd to more generous Conceptions, yet they could not have delivered them in Pastorals, which are only capable of Affections fit for their Quality; where S. P. *Sidney*, as in an Epick Poem, did express such things as both in War and in Peace were fit to be practised by 15 Princes. The most lofty of the other is the Marquis *d'Urfee* in his *Astrea*; and the choise Pieces there, representing any of the better Sorts, do seem borrowed from ancient Histories, or else Narrations that hapned in modern Times, rather true Discourses showing Persons 20 such as they were indeed, though with other Names, than for the framing of them for Perfection they should have been devised to be.

I have lately seen my Country-Man *Barclay's Argenis*, printed at *Rome*, though the Last in this Kind, yet no 30 way inferior to the First; he doth only meddle with Matters of State, War and Love, all chief Persons being Princes, which in my Judgment he doth discharge with a great Dexterity; and where he doth represent some Things, which either are Passages of this Time, or at 35

least, as having a great Conformity therewith, may be easily apply'd to the same, he doth it so finely, as if he found such Purposes in his Way, and went not astray with a Search too curiously elaborated. And if any Part  
5 of his Work distaste the Reader, it will be the extreme affecting of Policy, by clogging his Muse with too long and serious Discourses, which, though they be full of Wit and Judgment, will seem tedious to some. But his Work, whether judged of in the Whole or parted in Pieces, will be  
10 found to be a Body strong in Substance and full of Sinews in every Member.

# SIR JOHN SUCKLING

## A SESSIONS OF THE POETS

1637?

A Session was held the other day,  
And *Apollo* himself was at it, they say;  
The Laurel that had been so long reserv'd,  
Was now to be given to him best deserv'd.

And 5

Therefore the wits of the Town came thither,  
'T was strange to see how they flocked together;  
Each, strongly confident of his own way,  
Thought to gain the Laurel away that day.

There *Selden*, and he sate hard by the chair;  
*Weniman* not far off, which was very fair;  
*Sands* with *Townsend*, for they kept no order;  
*Digby* and *Shillingsworth* a little further:

10

And

There was *Lucans* Translators too, and he  
That makes God speak so bigge in 's Poetry;  
*Selwin*, and *Waller*, and *Bartlets* both the brothers;  
*Jack Vaughan*, and *Porter*, and divers others.

15

The first that broke silence was good old *Ben*,  
Prepar'd before with Canary wine;  
And he told them plainly he deserv'd the Bayes,  
For his were calld Works, where others were but Plaies.

20

And

Bid them remember how he had purg'd the Stage  
Of errors that had lasted many an Age;  
And he hopes they did not think the *silent Woman*,  
The *Fox*, and the *Alchymist* out done by no man.

25

*Apollo* stopt him there, and bade him not go on ;  
'Twas merit, he said, and not presumption  
Must carry 't ; at which *Ben* turned about,  
And in great choler offer'd to go out.

5

But

Those that were there thought it not fit  
To discontent so ancient a wit ;  
And therefore *Apollo* call'd him back agen,  
And made him mine host of his own new Inne.

10 *Tom Carew* was next, but he had a fault  
That would not well stand with a Laureat ;  
His Muse was hard bound, and th' issue of's brain  
Was seldom brought forth but with trouble and pain.

And

15 All that were present there did agree  
A Laureat Muse should be easie and free ;  
Yet sure 'twas not that, but 'twas thought that his Grace  
Consider'd he was well he had a Cup-bearers place.

*Will. Davenant* asham'd of a foolish mischance  
20 That he had got lately travelling in *France*,  
Modestly hoped the handsomnesse of 's Muse  
Might any deformity about him excuse.

And

Surely the Company would have been content,  
25 If they could have found any President ;  
But in all their Records, either in Verse or Prose,  
There was not one Laureat without a nose.

To *Will Bartlet* sure all the wits meant well,  
But first they would see how his snow would sell ;  
30 *Will* smil'd and swore in their judgements they went lesse,  
That concluded of merit upon successe.



Suddenly taking his place agen,  
 He gave way to *Selwin*, who streight stept in ;  
 But alas ! he had been so lately a wit,  
 That *Apollo* hardly knew him yet.

*Toby Mathews* (pox on him ! how came he there ?)

5

Was whispering nothing in some-bodies ear,  
 When he had the honour to be nam'd in Court ;  
 But, Sir, you may thank my Lady *Carleil* for 't :

For had not her care furnisht you out  
 With something of handsome, without all doubt  
 You and your sorry Lady Muse had been  
 In the number of those that were not let in.

10

In haste from the Court two or three came in,  
 And they brought letters, forsooth, from the Queen ;  
 'Twas discreetly done too, for if th' had come  
 Without them, th' had scarce been let into the room.

15

*Suckling* next was call'd, but did not appear ;  
 But strait one whisperd *Apollo* i' th' ear,  
 That of all men living he cared not for't,  
 He loved not the Muses so well as his sport ;

20

And prized black eyes, or a lucky hit  
 At bowls, above all the Trophies of wit ;  
 But *Apollo* was angry and publicly said,  
 'Twere fit that a fine were set upon 's head.

*Wat Montague* now stood forth to his tryal,  
 And did not so much as suspect a denial ;  
 But witty *Apollo* asked him first of all,  
 If he understood his own Pastoral.

25

For if he could do it, 't would plainly appear  
 He understood more than any man there,  
 And did merit the Bayes above all the rest ;  
 But the Mounsier was modest, and silence confest.

30

During these troubles in the Court was hid  
One that *Apollo* soon mist, little *Cid*;  
And having spied him, call'd him out of the throng,  
And advis'd him in his ear not to write so strong.

5 *Murrey* was summon'd, but 't was urg'd that he  
Was Chief already of another Company.

*Hales*, set by himself, most gravely did smile  
To see them about nothing keep such a coil;  
*Apollo* had spied him, but, knowing his mind,  
10 Past by, and call'd *Faulkland* that sate just behind.

But

He was of late so gone with Divinity  
That he had almost forgot his Poetry,  
Though to say the truth (and *Apollo* did know it)  
15 He might have been both his Priest and his Poet.

At length who but an Alderman did appear,  
At which *Will. Davenant* began to swear;  
But wiser *Apollo* bade him draw nigher,  
And when he was mounted a little higher,  
20 Openly declared that the best signe  
Of good store of wit's to have good store of coyn;  
And without a Syllable more or lesse said,  
He put the Laurel on the Aldermans head.

At this all the wits were in such a maze,  
25 That for a good while they did nothing but gaze  
One upon another; not a man in the place  
But had discontent writ in great in his face.

Onely the small Poets clear'd up again,  
Out of hope, as't was thought, of borrowing;  
30 But sure they were out, for he forfeits his Crown,  
When he lends any Poets about the Town.

# JOHN MILTON

## I. FROM THE SECOND BOOK OF *THE REASON OF CHURCH-GOVERNEMENT URG'D AGAINST PRELACY*

1641

LASTLY, I should not chuse this manner of writing, wherein knowing my self inferior to my self, led by the genial power of nature to another task, I have the use, as I may account it, but of my left hand. And though I shall be foolish in saying more to this purpose, yet since 5 it will be such a folly as wisest men, going about to commit, have only confest and so committed, I may trust with more reason, because with more folly, to have courteous pardon. For although a Poet, soaring in the high region of his fancies, with his garland and singing robes about him, 10 might without apology speak more of himself then I mean to do, yet for me sitting here below in the cool element of prose, a mortall thing among many readers of Emphyreall conceit, to venture and divulge unusual things of my selfe, I shall petition to the gentler sort, it may not be envy to 15 me. I must say therefore that after I had from my first yeeres by the ceaselesse diligence and care of my father, whom God recompence, bin exercis'd to the tongues, and some sciences, as my age would suffer, by sundry masters and teachers both at home and at the schools, it was found 20 that whether ought was impos'd me by them that had the overlooking, or betak'n to of mine own choise, in English or other tongue, prosing or versing, but chiefly this latter, the stile, by certain vital signes it had, was likely to live. But much latelier in the privat Academies of *Italy*, whither 25 I was favor'd to resort, perceiving that some trifles which

I had in memory, compos'd at under twenty or thereabout (for the manner is that every one must give some proof of his wit and reading there) met with acceptance above what was lookt for, and other things which I had shifted in  
 5 scarsity of books and conveniences to patch up amongst them were receiv'd with written Encomiums, which the Italian is not forward to bestow on men of this side the *Alps*, I began thus farre to assent both to them and divers of my friends here at home, and not lesse to an inward  
 10 prompting which now grew daily upon me, that by labour and intent study (which I take to be my portion in this life), joyn'd with the strong propensity of nature, I might perhaps leave something so written to aftertimes as they should not willingly let it die. These thoughts at once  
 15 possest me, and these other: That if *I* were certain to write as men buy Leases, for three lives and downward, there ought no regard be sooner had then to God's glory by the honour and instruction of my country. For which cause, and not only for that I knew it would be hard to  
 20 arrive at the second rank among the Latines, *I* apply'd my selfe to that resolution which *Ariosto* follow'd against the perswasions of *Bembo*, to fix all the industry and art I could unite to the adorning of my native tongue: not to make verbal curiosities the end (that were a toylsom vanity),  
 25 but to be an interpreter & relater of the best and sagest things among mine own Citizens throughout this Iland in the mother dialect: That what the greatest and choycest wits of *Athens*, *Rome*, or modern *Italy*, and those Hebrews of old, did for their country, I in my proportion, with this  
 30 over and above of being a Christian, might doe for mine; not caring to be once nam'd abroad, though perhaps I could attaine to that, but content with these British Ilands as my world, whose fortune hath hitherto bin, that if the Athenians, as some say, made their small deeds great and renowned  
 35 by their eloquent writers, *England* hath had her noble

atchievements made small by the unskilfull handling of monks and mechanicks.

Time serves not now, and perhaps I might seem too profuse, to give any certain account of what the mind at home in the spacious circuits of her musing hath liberty to propose to her self, though of highest hope and hardest attempting: whether that Epick form whereof the two poems of *Homer*, and those other two of *Virgil* and *Tasso* are a diffuse, and the book of *Iob* a brief, model: or whether the rules of *Aristotle* herein are strictly to be kept, or nature to be follow'd, which, in them that know art and use judgement, is no transgression, but an enriching of art: And, lastly, what K<ing> or Knight before the conquest might be chosen in whom to lay the pattern of a Christian *Heroe*. And as *Tasso* gave to a prince of *Italy* his choise whether he would command him to write of *Godfreys* expedition against the infidels, or *Belisarius* against the Gothes, or *Charlemain* against the Lombards, if to the instinct of nature and the imboldning of art ought may be trusted, and that there be nothing advers in our climat or the fate of this age, it haply would be no rashnesse from an equal diligence and inclination to present the like offer in our own ancient stories. Or whether those Dramatick constitutions, wherein *Sophocles* and *Euripides* raigne, shall be found more doctrinal and exemplary to a nation: the Scripture also affords us a divine pastoral Drama in the Song of *Salomon*, consisting of two persons and a double Chorus, as *Origen* rightly judges: And the Apocalyps of Saint *Iohn* is the majestick image of a high and stately Tragedy, shutting up and intermingling her solemn Scenes and Acts with a sevenfold Chorus of halleluja's and harping symphonies; and this my opinion the grave authority of *Pareus*, commenting that booke, is sufficient to confirm. Or if occasion shall lead to imitat those magnifick Odes and Hymns wherein *Pindarus* and *Callimachus* are in most



things worthy, some others in their frame judicious, in their matter most an(d) end faulty: But those frequent songs throughout the law and prophets beyond all these, not in their divine argument alone, but in the very critical  
5 art of composition, may be easily made appear over all the kinds of Lyrick poesy to be incomparable. These abilities, wheresoever they be found, are the inspired gift of God rarely bestow'd, but yet to some (though most abuse) in every Nation; and are of power, beside the office of a  
10 pulpit, to inbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of vertu and publick civility, to allay the perturbations of the mind, and set the affections in right tune, to celebrate in glorious and lofty Hymns the throne and equipage of Gods Almightynesse, and what he works, and what he  
15 suffers to be wrought with high providence in his Church, to sing the victorious agonies of Martyrs and Saints, the deeds and triumphs of just and pious Nations, doing valiantly through faith against the enemies of Christ; to deplore the general relapses of Kingdoms and States from  
20 justice and Gods true worship. Lastly, whatsoever in religion is holy and sublime, in vertu amiable or grave, whatsoever hath passion or admiration in all the changes of that which is call'd fortune from without, or the wily subtleties and reflexes of mans thoughts from within, all  
25 these things with a solid and treatable smoothnesse to paint out and describe: Teaching over the whole book of sanctity and vertu, through all the instances of example, with such delight to those especially of soft and delicious temper, who will not so much as look upon Truth herselfe  
30 unlesse they see her elegantly drest, that whereas the paths of honesty and good life appear now rugged and difficult, though they be indeed easy and pleasant, they would then appeare to all men both easy and pleasant, though they were rugged and difficult indeed. And what a benefit this  
35 would be to our youth and gentry may be soon guest by

what we know of the corruption and bane which they suck in dayly from the writings and interludes of libidinous and ignorant Poetasters, who, having scars ever heard of that which is the main consistence of a true poem, the choys of such persons as they ought to introduce, and what is morall and decent to each one, doe for the most part lap up vitious principles in sweet pils to be swallow'd down, and make the tast of vertuous documents harsh and sowr. But because the spirit of man cannot demean it selfe lively in this body without some recreating intermission of labour and serious things, it were happy for the Common wealth, if our Magistrates, as in those famous governments of old, would take into their care, not only the deciding of our contentious Law cases and brauls, but the managing of our publick sports and festival pastimes; that they might be, not such as were autoriz'd a while since, the provocations of drunkennesse and lust, but such as may inure and harden our bodies by martial exercises to all warlike skil and performance, and may civilize, adorn, and make discreet our minds by the learned and affable meeting of frequent Academies, and the procurement of wise and artfull recitations sweetned with eloquent and gracefull inticements to the love and practice of justice, temperance, and fortitude, instructing and bettering the Nation at all opportunities, that the call of wisdom and vertu may be heard every where, as *Salomon saith, She crieth without, she uttereth her voice in the streets, in the top of high places, in the chief concours, and in the openings of the Gates.* Whether this may not be, not only in Pulpits, but after another persuasive method, at set and solemn Paneguries, in Theaters, porches, or what other place or way may win most upon the people to receiv at once both recreation & instruction, let them in authority consult. The thing which I had to say, and those intentions which have liv'd within me ever since I could conceiv my self any thing worth to

my Countrie, I return to crave excuse that urgent reason hath pluckt from me by an abortive and foredated discovery. And the accomplishment of them lies not but in a power above mans to promise; but that none hath by more  
5 studious ways endeavour'd, and with more unwearied spirit that none shall, that I dare almost averre of my self, as farre as life and free leasure will extend, and that the Land had once infranchis'd her self from this impertinent yoke of prelaty, under whose inquisitorius and tyrannical  
10 duncery no free and splendid wit can flourish. Neither doe I think it shame to covnant with any knowing reader, that for some few yeers yet I may go on trust with him toward the payment of what I am now indebted, as being a work not to be rays'd from the heat of youth, or the  
15 vapours of wine, like that which flows at wast from the pen of some vulgar Amorist, or the trencher fury of a riming parasite, nor to be obtain'd by the invocation of Dame Memory and her Siren daughters, but by devout prayer to that eternall Spirit who can enrich with all utter-  
20 ance and knowledge, and sends out his Seraphim with the hallow'd fire of his Altar to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases: to this must be added industrious and select reading, steddy observation, insight into all seemly and generous arts and affaires; till which in some measure  
25 be compast, at mine own peril and cost, I refuse not to sustain this expectation from as many as are not loath to hazard so much credulity upon the best pledges that I can give them. Although it nothing content me to have disclos'd thus much before hand, but that I trust hereby to  
30 make it manifest with what small willingnesse I endure to interrupt the pursuit of no lesse hopes then these, and leave a calme and pleasing solitarynes, fed with cherful and confident thoughts, to imbark in a troubl'd sea of noises and hoars disputes, put from beholding the bright  
35 countenance of truth in the quiet and still air of delightfull

studies to come into the dim reflexion of hollow antiquities sold by the seeming bulk, and there be fain to club quotations with men whose learning and beleif lies in marginal stuffings, who, when they have like good sumpters laid ye down their hors load of citations and fathers at 5 your dore, with a rapsody of who and who were Bishops here or there, ye may take off their packsaddles, their days work is don, and episcopacy, as they think, stoutly vindicated. Let any gentle apprehension that can distinguish learned pains from unlearned drudgery, imagin 10 what pleasure or profoundnesse can be in this, or what honour to deal against such adversaries. But were it the meanest under-service, if God by his Secretary conscience injoyn it, it were sad for me if I should draw back,—for me especially, now when all men offer their aid to help, ease, 15 and enlighten the difficult labours of the Church, to whose service by the intentions of my parents and friends *I* was destin'd of a child, and in mine own resolutions; till comming to some maturity of yeers, and perceaving what tyranny had invaded the church, that he who would take 20 Orders must subsc(r)ibe slave, and take an oath withall, which, unlesse he took with a conscience that would retch, he must either strait perjure, or split his faith, *I* thought it better to preferre a blamelesse silence before the sacred office of speaking, bought and begun with servitude 25 and forswearing. Howsoever, thus Church-outed by the Prelats, hence may appear the right I have to meddle in these matters, as before the necessity and constraint appear'd. . . .

II. FROM AN APOLOGY AGAINST A PAMPHLET  
CALL'D A MODEST CONFUTATION OF THE  
ANIMADVERSIONS UPON THE REMONSTRANT  
AGAINST SMECTYMNUS

1642

I HAD my time, Readers, as others have, who have good learning bestow'd upon them, to be sent to those places where, the opinion was, it might be soonest attain'd ; and as the manner is, was not unstudied in those authors which  
5 are most commended ; whereof some were grave Orators & Historians, whose matter me thought I lov'd indeed, but as my age then was, so I understood them ; others were the smooth Elegiack Poets, whereof the Schooles are not scarce : Whom, both for the pleasing sound of their nume-  
10 rous writing, which in imitation I found most easie, and most agreeable to natures part in me, and for their matter, which what it is there be few who know not, I was so allur'd to read, that no recreation came to me better welcome. For that it was then those years with me which  
15 are excus'd, though they be least severe, I may be sav'd the labour to remember ye. Whence having observ'd them to account it the chiefe glory of their wit, in that they were ablest to judge, to praise, and by that could esteeme themselves worthiest to love those high perfections which  
20 under one or other name they took to celebrate ; I thought with my selfe by every instinct and presage of nature which is not wont to be false, that what imboldn'd them to this task might with such diligence as they us'd imbolden me ; and that what judgement, wit, or elegance was my  
25 share would herein best appeare, and best value it selfe, by how much more wisely and with more love of vertue I should choose (let rude eares be absent) the object of not unlike praises. For albeit these thoughts to some will



seeme vertuous and commendable, to others only pardonable, to a third sort perhaps idle, yet the mentioning of them now will end in serious. Nor blame it, Readers, in those yeares to propose to themselves such a reward as the noblest dispositions above other things in this life have sometimes preferr'd: Whereof not to be sensible, when good and faire in one person meet, argues both a grosse and shallow judgement, and withall an ungente and swinish brest. For by the firme setting of these perswasions, I became, to my best memory, so much a proficient, that if I found those authors any where speaking unworthy things of themselves, or unchaste of those names which before they had extoll'd, this effect it wrought with me, from that time forward their art I still applauded, but the men I deplor'd; and above them all, preferr'd the two famous renowners of *Beatrice* and *Laura*, who never write but honour of them to whom they devote their verse, displaying sublime and pure thoughts, without transgression. And long it was not after when I was confirm'd in this opinion, that he who would not be frustrate of his hope to write well hereafter in laudable things, ought him selfe to bee a true Poem; that is, a composition and patterne of the best and honourablest things; not presuming to sing high praises of heroick men or famous Cities, unlesse he have in himselfe the experience and the practice of all that which is praise-worthy. These reasonings, together with a certaine nicenesse of nature, an honest haughtinesse, and self-esteem either of what I was or what I might be (which let envie call pride), and lastly that modesty, whereof, though not in the Title page, yet here I may be excus'd to make some beseeching profession,—all these uniting the supply of their naturall aide together, kept me still above those low descents of minde, beneath which he must deject and plunge himself, that can agree to salable and unlawfull prostitutions. Next (for heare me out now, Readers, that I may tell ye whether my younger

feet wander'd) I betook me among those lofty Fables and Romances, which recount in solemne canto's the deeds of Knighthood founded by our victorious Kings, & from hence had in renowne over all Christendome. There I  
5 read it in the oath of every Knight, that he should defend to the expence of his best blood, or of his life, if it so befell him, the honour and chastity of Virgin or Matron. From whence even then I learnt what a noble vertue chastity sure must be, to the defence of which so many worthies, by  
10 such a deare adventure of themselves, had sworne. And if I found in the story afterward any of them by word or deed breaking that oath, I judg'd it the same fault of the Poet as that which is attributed to *Homer*, to have written undecent things of the gods. Only this my minde gave  
15 me, that every free and gentle spirit, without that oath, ought to be borne a Knight, nor needed to expect the guilt spurre, or the laying of a sword upon his shoulder, to stirre him up both by his counsell and his arme to secure and protect the weaknesse of any attempted chastity. So that  
20 even those books, which to many others have bin the fuell of wantonnesse and loose living, I cannot thinke how unlesse by divine indulgence prov'd to me so many incitements, as you have heard, to the love and stedfast observation of that vertue which abhorres the society of Bordello's. Thus,  
25 from the Laureat fraternity of Poets, riper yeares and the ceaselesse round of study and reading led me to the shady spaces of philosophy, but chiefly to the divine volumes of *Plato* and his equall *Xenophon*: Where, if I should tell ye what I learnt of chastity and love, I meane that which is  
30 truly so, whose charming cup is only vertue, which she bears in her hand to those who are worthy (The rest are cheated with a thick intoxicating potion which a certaine Sorceresse, the abuser of loves name, carries about), and how the first and chieftest office of love begins and ends in  
35 the soule, producing those happy twins of her divine

generation, knowledge and vertue,—with such abstracted sublimities as these, it might be worth your listning, Readers, as I may one day hope to have ye in a still time, when there shall be no chiding; not in these noises, the adversary, as ye know, barking at the doore, or searching 5 for me at the Burdello's, where it may be he has lost himselfe, and raps up without pittie the sage and rheumatick old *Prelatesse*, with all her young *Corinthian Laity*, to inquire for such a one. . . .

For this good hap I had from a carefull education, 10 to be inur'd and season'd betimes with the best and elegantest authors of the learned tongues, and thereto brought an eare that could measure a just cadence, and scan without articulating, rather nice and humorous in what was tolerable then patient to read every drawling 15 versifier. Whence lighting upon this title of *toothlesse Satirs*, I will not conceale ye what I thought, Readers, that sure this must be some sucking Satir, who might have done better to have us'd his corall, and made an end of breeding, ere he took upon him to weild a Satirs whip. 20 But when I heard him talk of *scouring the rusted swords of elvish Knights*, doe not blame me if I chang'd my thought, and concluded him some desperate Cutler. But why *his scornefull muse could never abide with tragick shoos her ankles for to hide*, the pace of the verse told me that her 25 maukin knuckles were never shapen to that royall buskin. And turning by chance to the sixth Satyr of his Second book, I was confirm'd; where having begun loftily in *heavens universall Alphabet*, he fals downe to that wretched poorenesse and frigidity as to talke of *Bridge street in* 30 *heav'n*, and *the Ostler of heav'n*, and there wanting other matter to catch him a heat (for certaine he was in the frozen *Zone* miserably benumm'd), with thoughts lower then any Beadle betakes him to whip the signe posts of *Cambridge Alehouses*, the ordinary subject of freshmens 35

tales, and in a straine as pittifull. Which for him who would be counted *the first English Satyr* to abase himselfe to, who might have learnt better among the Latin and Italian Satyrists, and in our own tongue from the *vision*  
5 *and Creed of Pierce plowman*, besides others before him, manifested a presumptuous undertaking with weak and unexamin'd shoulders. For a Satyr, as it was borne out of a *Tragedy*, so ought to resemble his parentage, to strike high, and adventure dangerously at the most eminent vices  
10 among the greatest persons, and not to creepe into every blinde Taphouse, that fears a Constable more then a Satyr. But that such a poem should be toothlesse, I still affirme it to be a bull, taking away the essence of that which it calls it selfe. For if it bite neither the persons nor the  
15 vices, how is it a Satyr, and if it bite either, how is it toothlesse, so that toothlesse Satyrs are as much as if he had said toothlesse teeth. What we should do therefore with this learned Comment upon *teeth* and *horns*, which hath brought this confutant into his *Pedantick* kingdome  
20 of *Cornucopia*, to reward him for glossing upon *hornes* even to the *Hebrew root*, I know not, unlesse we should commend him to be Lecturer in East-Cheap upon S. *Lukes* day, when they send their tribute to that famous hav'n by Detford. But we are not like to scape him so. For now  
25 the worine of *Criticisme* works in him, he will tell us the derivation of *German rutters, of meat, and of ink*, which, doubtlesse, rightly apply'd with some gall in it, may prove good to heale this teller of *Pedagoguisme* that bespreads him, with such a *tenasmus* of originating, that if he be an  
30 Arminian and deny originall sinne, all the *etymologies* of his book shall witness that his brain is not meanly tainted with that infection. . . .

### III. FROM THE TREATISE OF EDUCATION, TO MASTER SAMUEL HARTLIB

1644

AND now, lastly, will be the time to read with them those organic arts, which inable men to discourse and write perspicuously, elegantly, and according to the fitted stile of lofty, mean, or lowly. Logic, therefore, so much as is usefull, is to be referr'd to this due place, with all her well coucht heads and Topics, untill it be time to open her contracted palm into a gracefull and ornate Rhetorick, taught out of the rule of *Plato, Aristotle, Phalereus, Cicero, Hermogenes, Longinus*. To which Poetry would be made subsequent, or indeed rather precedent, as being lesse subtle and fine, but more simple, sensuous, and passionate. I mean not here the prosody of a verse, which they could not but have hit on before among the rudiments of grammar; but that sublime art which in *Aristotles poetics*, in *Horace*, and the *Italian commentaries* of *Castelvetro, Tasso, Mazzoni*, and others, teaches what the laws are of a true *Epic* poem, what of a *Dramatic*, what of a *Lyric*, what decorum is, which is the grand master peece to observe. This would make them soon perceive what despicable creatures our common rimers and play writes be, and shew them what Religious, what glorious and magnificent use might be made of Poetry, both in divine and humane things. . . .

### IV. PREFACE TO *PARADISE LOST*

1668

#### *The Verse*

THE Measure is *English Heroic Verse* without Rime, as that of *Homer* in *Greek*, and of *Virgil* in *Latin*,— Rime being no necessary Adjunct or true Ornament of



Poem or good Verse, in longer Works especially, but the  
 Invention of a barbarous Age, to set off wretched matter  
 and lame Meeter; grac't indeed since by the use of some  
 famous modern Poets, carried away by Custom, but much  
 5 to their own vexation, hindrance, and constraint to express  
 many things otherwise, and for the most part worse, then  
 else they would have exprest them. Not without cause  
 therefore some both *Italian* and *Spanish* Poets of prime  
 note have rejected Rime both in longer and shorter Works,  
 10 as have also long since our best *English* Tragedies, as  
 a thing of it self, to all judicious eares, triveal and of no  
 true musical delight; which consists only in apt Numbers,  
 fit quantity of Syllables, and the sense variously drawn  
 out from one Verse into another, not in the jingling sound  
 15 of like endings, a fault avoyded by the learned Ancients  
 both in Poetry and all good Oratory. This neglect then  
 of Rime so little is to be taken for a defect, though it may  
 seem so perhaps to vulgar Readers, that it rather is to be  
 esteem'd an example set, the first in *English*, of ancient  
 20 liberty recover'd to Heroic Poem from the troublesom  
 and modern bondage of Rimeing.

## V. PREFACE TO *SAMSON AGONISTES*

1671

*Of that sort of Dramatic Poem which is call'd Tragedy*

TRAGEDY, as it was antiently compos'd, hath been ever  
 held the gravest, moralest, and most profitable of all  
 other Poems; therefore said by *Aristotle* to be of power,  
 25 by raising pity and fear, or terror, to purge the mind of  
 those and such like passions, that is, to temper and reduce  
 them to just measure with a kind of delight, stirr'd up by  
 reading or seeing those passions well imitated. Nor is  
 Nature wanting in her own effects to make good his asser-

tion; for so, in Physic, things of melancholic hue and quality are us'd against melancholy, sower against sower, salt to remove salt humours. Hence Philosophers and other gravest Writers, as *Cicero*, *Plutarch*, and others, frequently cite out of Tragic Poets, both to adorn and illustrate their discourse. The Apostle *Paul* himself thought it not unworthy to insert a verse of *Euripides* into the Text of Holy Scripture, 1 *Cor.* 15. 33; and *Paræus*, commenting on the *Revelation*, divides the whole Book, as a Tragedy, into Acts, distinguish'd each by a Chorus of Heavenly Harpings and Song between. Heretofore Men in highest dignity have labour'd not a little to be thought able to compose a Tragedy. Of that honour *Dionysius* the elder was no less ambitious then before of his attaining to the Tyranny. *Augustus Cæsar* also had begun his *Ajax*, but, unable to please his own judgment with what he had begun, left it unfinished. *Seneca* the Philosopher is by some thought the Author of those Tragedies (at least the best of them) that go under that name. *Gregory Nazianzen*, a Father of the Church, thought it not unbecoming the sanctity of his person to write a Tragedy, which he entitl'd *Christ suffering*. This is mention'd to vindicate Tragedy from the small esteem, or rather infamy, which in the account of many it undergoes at this day, with other common Interludes; hap'ning through the Poets error of intermixing Comic stuff with Tragic sadness and gravity, or introducing trivial and vulgar persons: which by all judicious hath bin counted absurd, and brought in without discretion, corruptly to gratifie the people. And though antient Tragedy use no Prologue, yet using sometimes, in case of self defence or explanation, that which *Martial* calls an Epistle, in behalf of this Tragedy, coming forth after the antient manner, much different from what among us passes for best, thus much before-hand may be Epistl'd: that *Chorus* is here introduc'd after the Greek manner, not

antient only, but modern, and still in use among the *Italians*.  
 In the modelling therefore of this Poem, with good reason,  
 the Antients and *Italians* are rather follow'd, as of much  
 more authority and fame. The measure of Verse us'd in  
 5 the Chorus is of all sorts, call'd by the Greeks *Monostrophic*,  
 or rather *Apolelymenon*, without regard had to *Strophe*,  
*Antistrophe*, or *Epod*; which were a kind of Stanza's  
 fram'd only for the Music, then us'd with the Chorus that  
 sung, not essential to the Poem, and therefore not material;  
 10 or being divided into Stanza's or Pauses, they may be  
 call'd *Allæostropha*. Division into Act and Scene, referring  
 chiefly to the Stage (to which this work never was intended),  
 is here omitted.

It suffices if the whole Drama be found not produc't  
 15 beyond the fift Act; of the style and uniformitie, and  
 that commonly call'd the Plot, whether intricate or explicit,—  
 which is nothing indeed but such œconomy or disposition  
 of the fable as may stand best with verisimilitude and  
 decorum,—they only will best judge who are not un-  
 20 acquainted with *Æschulus*, *Sophocles*, and *Euripides*, the  
 three Tragic Poets unequall'd yet by any, and the best  
 rule to all who endeavour to write Tragedy. The circum-  
 scription of time, wherein the whole Drama begins and  
 ends, is, according to antient rule and best example, within  
 25 the space of 24 hours.

# APPENDIX

## FROM THE CONVERSATIONS OF BEN JONSON AND WILLIAM DRUMMOND OF HAWTHORNDEN

1619

### I. BEN JONSON

CERTAIN INFORMATIONS AND MANERS OF BEN JOHNSON'S  
TO W. DRUMMOND.

#### I.

THAT he had ane intention to perfect ane Epick Poeme intituled Heroologia, of the Worthies of this Country rowsed by Fame, and was to dedicate it to his Country; it is all in 5 couplets, for he detesteth all other rimes. Said he had written a Discourse of Poesie both against Campion and Daniel, especially this last, wher he proves couplets to be the bravest sort of verses, especially when they are broken, like Hexameters, and that crosse rimes and stanzaes (becaus 10 the purpose would lead him beyond 8 lines to conclude) were all forced.

#### II.

He recommended to my reading Quintilian, who, he said, would tell me the faults of my Verses as if he lived with me, and Horace, Plinius Secundus Epistles, Tacitus, 15 Juvenall, Martiall, whose Epigrame, *Vitam quæ faciunt beatiorem*, &c., he hath translated.

#### III.

HIS CENSURE OF THE ENGLISH POETS WAS THIS:

That Sidney did not keep a decorum in making every one speak as well as himself. 20  
Spenser's stanzaes pleased him not, nor his matter; the

meaning of which Allegorie he had delivered in papers to Sir Walter Raughlie.

Samuel Daniel was a good honest man, had no children ; but no poet.

5 That Michael Drayton's Polyolbion, if <he> had performed what he promised to writte (the deeds of all the Worthies) had been excellent: His long verses pleased him not.

That Silvester's translation of Du Bartas was not well  
10 done ; and that he wrote his verses before it ere he understood to conferr: Nor that of Fairfax his.

That the translations of Homer and Virgill in long Alexandrines were but prose.

That John Harington's Ariosto, under all translations,  
15 was the worst. That when Sir John Harrington desyred him to tell the truth of his Epigrames, he answered him that he loved not the truth, for they were Narrations and not Epigrames.

That Warner, since the King's comming to England, had  
20 marred all his Albion's England.

That Done's Anniversarie was profane and full of blasphemies ; that he told Mr. Done, if it had been written of the Virgin Marie it had been something ; to which he answered that he described the Idea of a Woman, and not  
25 as she was. That Done, for not keeping of accent, deserved hanging.

That Shakspeer wanted arte.

That Sharpham, Day, Dicker were all rogues, and that Minshew was one.

30 That Abram Francis, in his English Hexameters, was a foole.

That next himself, only Fletcher and Chapman could make a Mask.

#### IV.

#### HIS JUDGEMENT OF STRANGER POETS WAS :

35 That he thought not Bartas a Poet, but a Verser, because he wrote not fiction.

He cursed Petrarch for redacting verses to Sonnets, which he said were like that Tirrant's bed, wher some who where too short were racked, others too long cut  
40 short.



That Guarini, in his Pastor Fido, kept not decorum, in making Shepherds speek as well as himself could.

That Lucan, taken in parts, was good divided; read altogidder, merited not the name of a Poet.

That Bonifonius Vigilium Veneris was excellent. 5

That he told Cardinal de Perron, at his being in France, anno 1613, who shew him his translations of Virgill, that they were naught.

That the best pieces of Ronsard were his Odes.

*All this was to no purpose, for he neither doeth understand 10 French nor Italiannes.*

## V.

To me he read the preface of his Arte of Poesie, upon Horace Arte of Poesie, wher he heth ane Apologie of a play of his, St. Bartholomee's Faire; by Criticus is understood Done. Ther is ane Epigrame of Sir Edward 15 Herbert's befor it: this he said he had done in my Lord Aubanie's house ten years since, anno 1604.

## VI.

### HIS CENSURE ON MY VERSES WAS:

That they were all good, especiallie my Epitaphe of the Prince, save that they smelled too much of the Schooles, 20 and were not after the fancie of the tyme; for a child (sayes he) may writte after the fashion of the Greeks and Latine verses in running; yett that he wished, to please the King, that piece of Forth Feasting had been his owne.

## VII.

He esteemeth John Done the first poet in the world in 25 some things: his verses of the Lost Chaine he heth by heart, and that passage of the Calme, *That dust and feathers doe not stirr, all was so quiet.* Affirmeth Done to have written all his best pieces ere he was 25 years old.

Sir Edward Wotton's verses of a happie lyfe he hath by 30 heart; and a peice of Chapman's translation of the 13 of the Iliads, which he thinketh well done.

That Done said to him, he wrott that Epitaph on Prince Henry, *Look to me, Faith,* to match Sir Ed: Herbert in obscurenesse.

He hath by heart some verses of Spenser's Calender about wyne, between Coline and Percy.

## IX.

That Petronius, Plinius Secundus, Tacitus, spoke best Latine; that Quintiliane's 6, 7, 8 bookes were not only to  
 5 be read but altogether digested. Juvenal, Perse, Horace, Martiall, for delight; and so was Pindar. For health, Hippocrates.

Of their Nation, Hooker's Ecclesiasticall historie (whose children are now beggars), for church matters. Selden's  
 10 Titles of Honour, for Antiquities here; and ane book of the Gods of the Gentiles, whose names are in the Scripture, of Selden's.

Tacitus, he said, wrott the secrets of the Councill and Senate, as Suetonius did those of the Cabinet and Courte.

## X.

15 For a Heroik poeme, he said, ther was no such ground as King Arthur's fiction; and that S. P. Sidney had ane intention to have transform'd all his Arcadia to the stories of King Arthure.

## XII.

That Southwell was hanged; yet so he had written that  
 20 piece of his, the Burning Babe, he would have been content to destroy many of his.

Done's grandfather, on the mother side, was Heywood the Epigramatist. That Done himself, for not being understood, would perish.

25 Sheakspear, in a play, brought in a number of men saying they had suffered shipwrack in Bohemia, wher ther is no sea neer by some 100 miles.

Daniel wrott Civill Warres, and yett hath not one batle in all his book.

30 Owen is a pure pedantique schoolmaster, sweeping his living from the posteriors of litle children; and hath no thinge good in him, his Epigrames being bare narrations.

Flesher and Beaumont, ten yeers since, hath written the Faithfull Shipheardesse, a Tragicomedie, well done.

## XV.

## HIS OPINION OF VERSES.

That he wrott all his first in prose, for so his Master, Cambden, had learned him.

That verses stood by sense without either colours or accent; *which yett other tymes he denied.* 5

A great many epigrams were ill, because they expressed in the end what sould have been understood by what was said. That of S. Joh. Davies, 'Some loved running verses,' *plus mihi complacet.*

He scorned such verses as could be transposed. 10

Wher is the man that never yett did hear  
Of faire Penelope, Ulisses Queene?  
Of faire Penelope, Ulisses Queene,  
Wher is the man that never yett did hear?

## XVI.

## OF HIS WORKES.

15

He hath a pastorall intituled The May Lord . . . *Contrary to all other pastoralls, he bringeth the clownes making mirth and foolish sports.*

He hath intention to writt a fisher or pastorall play, and sett the stage of it in the Lowmond lake. 20

A play of his, upon which he was accused, The Divell is ane Asse; according to *Comedia Vetus*, in England, the Divell was brought in either with one Vice or other; the play done, the Divel caried away the Vice, he brings in the Divel so overcome with the wickedness of this age that 25  
(he) thought himself ane Ass. Παρέργους is discoursed of the Duke of Drounland; the King desired him to conceal it.

He hath commented and translated Horace Art of Poesie: it is in dialogue wayes; by Criticus he under- 30  
standeth Dr. Done. The old book that goes about, The Art of English Poesie, was done 20 yeers since, and kept long in wrytt as a secret.

He had ane intention to have made a play like Plautus Amphitrio, but left it of, for that he could never find two 35  
so like others that he could persuade the spectators they were one.

## XVIII.

## MISCELLANIES.

John Stow had monstrous observations in his Chronicle, and was of his craft a tailour.

In his Sejanus he hath translated a whole oration of  
5 Tacitus; the first four bookes of Tacitus ignorantly done in Englishe.

Lucan, Sidney, Guarini, make every man speak as well as themselves, forgetting decorum; for Dametas sometymes speaks grave sentences. Lucan taken in parts excellent,  
10 altogidder naught.

He dissuaded me from Poetrie, for that she had beggared him, when he might have been a rich lawer, physitian, or marchant.

He was better versed, and knew more in Greek and  
15 Latin, than all the Poets in England, and quintessence their braines.

## II. WILLIAM DRUMMOND OF HAWTHORNDEN

Mr. *Drummond* gave the following Character of several Authors:

The Authors I have seen (saith he) on the Subject of  
20 Love are the Earl of *Surrey*, Sir *Thomas Wyatt*,—whom, because of their Antiquity, I will not match with our better Times,—*Sidney*, *Daniel*, *Drayton*, and *Spencer*. He who writeth the Art of *English Poesy* praiseth much *Rawleigh* and *Dyer*; but their Works are so few that are come to  
25 my Hands, I cannot well say any thing of them.

The last we have seen are Sir *William Alexander* and *Shakespear*, who have lately published their Works. *Constable*, saith some, hath written excellently; and *Murray*, with others, I know, hath done well, if they could be  
30 brought to publish their Works: But of Secrets who can soundly judge?

The best and most exquisite Poet of this Subject, by Consent of the whole Senate of Poets, is *Petrarch*.

S. W. R., in an Epitaph on *Sidney*, calleth him our *English Petrarch*; and *Daniel* regrates he was not a *Petrarch*, though his *Delia* be a *Laura*. So *Sidney*, in his *Ast.* and *Stella*, telleth of *Petrarch*, *You that pure Petrarch long deceast Wooes with new-born Sighs.* 5

The *French* have also set him before them as a Paragon; whereof we will still find that those of our *English* Poets who have approach'd nearest to him are the most exquisite on this Subject. When I say, approach him, I mean not in following his Invention, but in forging as good; and 10 when one Matter cometh to them all at once, who quint-essenceth it in the finest Substance.

Among our *English* Poets, *Petrarch* is imitated, nay, surpast in some Things, in Matter and Manner: In Matter, none approach him to *Sidney*, who hath Songs and Sonnets 15 in Matter intermingled: In Manner, the nearest I find to him is *W. Alexander*, who, insisting in these same Steps, hath Sextains, Madrigals and Songs, Echoes and Equivoques, which he hath not; whereby, as the one hath surpast him in Matter, so the other in Manner of Writting, or 20 Form. This one Thing which is followed by the *Italians*, as of *Sanazarius* and others, is, That none celebrateth their Mistress after her Death, which *Ronsard* hath imitated: After which Two, next (methinks) followeth *Daniel*, for Sweetness in Ryming Second to none. *Drayton* seemeth 25 rather to have loved his Muse than his Mistress; by I know not what artificial *Similes*, this sheweth well his Mind, but not the Passion. As to that which *Spencer* calleth his *Amorelli*, I am not of their Opinion who think them his; for they are so childish that it were not well to 30 give them so honourable a Father.

*Donne*, among the Anacreontick Lyrics, is Second to none, and far from all Second. But as *Anacreon* doth not approach *Callimachus*, tho' he excels in his own kind, nor *Horace* to *Virgil*, no more can I be brought to 35 think him to excel either *Alexander's* or *Sidney's* Verses. They can hardly be compared together, trading diverse Paths,—the one flying swift but low, the other, like the Eagle, surpassing the Clouds. I think, if he would, he might easily be the best Epigrammatist we have found 40 in *English*, of which I have not yet seen any come near the Ancients.



Compare Song, *Marry and Love*, &c., with *Tasso's Stanzas against Beauty*; one shall hardly know who hath the best.

*Drayton's Polyolbion* is one of the smoothest Poems I have seen in *English*, Poetical and well prosecuted; there are some Pieces in him I dare compare with the best Transmarine Poems.

The 7th Song pleases me much.

The 12th is excellent.

10 The 13th also: The *Discourse of Hunting* passeth with any Poet. And

The 18th, which is his Last in this Edition 1614.

I find in him, which is in most part of my Compatriots, too great an Admiration of their Country, on the History  
15 of which whilst they muse, as wondering, they forget sometimes to be good Poets.

*Silvester's* Translation of *Judith*, and the Battle of *Yvory*, are excellent. He is not happy in his Inventions, as may be seen in his *Tobacco batter'd* and *Epitaphes*. Who likes  
20 to know whether he or *Hudson* hath the Advantage of *Judith*, let them compare the Beginning of the 4th Book, *O Silver brow'd Diana*, &c. And the End of the 4th Book, *Her waved Locks*, &c. The midst of the 5th Book, *In Ragau's ample Plain one Morning met*, &c. The 6th Book,  
25 after the Beginning, *Each being set anon, fulfilled out*, &c. And after, *Judas, said she, thy Jacob to deliver, now is the Time*, &c. His Pains are much to be praised, and happy Translations, in sundry parts equalling the Original.



## NOTES

### FRANCIS BACON (1561-1626)

PAGE 2. 14. John vii. 49.

31. Osorius (1506-1580), bishop of Sylves in Algarve, a Portuguese humanist and historian.

32. Joannes Sturmius (1507-1589), the Strassburg schoolmaster: he edited Cicero's works (1557 sq.) and four treatises of Hermogenes, and published several commentaries on their works.

34. *Car of Cambridge*, i. e. Nicholas Carr (1524-1568), the successor of Sir John Cheke as Regius Professor of Greek.

34. Roger Ascham (1515-1568), the author of the *Schole-master*.

PAGE 3. 4. 'Decem iam annos aetatem trivi in Cicerone. Echo: ὅνε,' Erasmus, *Colloq.* 'Echo.'

19. Ovid, *Metam.* x. 243.

PAGE 4. 10-13. Bacon has here adopted the conventional Scholastic psychology; e. g. 'In cerebro sub craneo sunt tres cellulae; prima est ymaginaria, secunda rationalis, tertia memorialis,' Joannes de Garlandia, *Dictionarius* (cf. E. Flügel, 'Bacon's Historia Literaria,' in *Anglia*, 1899, xxii. 273). The classification of the arts and sciences according to these three divisions of the mind had been initiated, or at least popularized, by the Spaniard Huarte in his *Examen de Ingenios*, 1575 (Englished by R. Carew in 1594), and was adopted before Bacon by Charron (*De la Sagesse*, 1601, bk. i. ch. 12, § 6).

PAGE 5. 27. Horace, *A. P.* 9 sq.

PAGE 6. 30. In the *De Augmentis* a paragraph on dramatic poetry follows, thus translated by Gilbert Wats (1640, p. 107): 'Dramaticall or Representative Poesy, which brings the World upon the stage, is of excellent use, if it were not abused. For the Instructions and Corruptions of the Stage may be great: but the corruptions in this kind abound; the Discipline is

altogether neglected in our times. For although in moderne Commonwealths Stage-plaies be but esteemed a sport or pastime, unless it draw from the Satyre and be mordant, yet the care of the Ancients was that it should instruct the minds of men unto virtue. Nay, wise men and great Philosophers have accounted it as the Archer or muscally Bow of the mind. And certainly it is most true, and, as it were, a secret of nature, that the minds of men are more patent of affections and impressions Congregate than solitary.'

PAGE 7. 11. *The seven*, i. e. the seven wise men of Greece.

32. Virgil, *Aen.* iv. 178.

PAGE 8. 6. *Pallas*. Thetis, according to Homer, *Il.* i. 401 sq.

11. *Il.* xii. 831; cf. Plutarch, *De Musica*, xl. 4.

13. Machiavelli, *The Prince*, ch. xviii.

20. Chrysippus (died B. C. 208) and other Stoic philosophers attempted to rationalize the ancient mythology by means of allegorical interpretation; cf. Cicero, *De Nat. Deor.* i. 15. 38 sq. For the early history of allegorical exegesis, see Hatch, *Hibbert Lectures*, 1888, ch. iii, and for its later influence, cf. my *Literary Criticism in the Renaissance*, p. 7 sq.

26 sq. Cf. Rabelais, *Gargantua*, prol.: 'Croiez vous en vostre foy qu'oncques Homere, escriuent L'Iliade & Odysee, pensast es allegories lesquelles de luy ont calfreté Plutarche, Heraclides Ponticq, Eustatie, Phornute, & ce que d'iceulx Politian a desrobé? Si le croiez, vous n'approchez ne de pieds ne de mains à mon opinion.'

## BEN JONSON (1573?-1637)

PAGE 10. 10-14. Cf. *infra*, 65. 15, and note.

16. These observations, which by 1619 had assumed the form of a dialogue between himself and Donne (cf. *infra*, 212. 12, and 214. 29), were among the papers destroyed by fire about 1623. Cf. 'An Execration upon Vulcan', in *Underwoods*:

'All the old *Venusine*, in Poetrie,  
And lighted by the *Stagerite*, could spie,  
Was there made English.'

18-20. These are the laws, among others, which Jonson in preface and prologue incessantly boasts of having introduced upon the English stage; for their sources in continental criticism, see my *Lit. Crit. in the Ren.* p. 60 sq. So of comedy he says in the prologue of *Volpone*:

‘And so presents quick *Comædie*, refined,  
As best Criticks have designed;  
The laws of time, place, persons he observeth,  
From no needfull rule he swerveth.’

25 sq. Cf. Marston’s gibe in the preface to *Sophonisba*, published in the next year (ed. Bullen, ii. 235).

PAGE 12. 16, 17. *The impossibility of any mans being the good Poët without first being a good Man.* A favourite idea of Renaissance criticism, going back to Strabo, *Geog.* i. 2. 5. Cf. Minturno, *De Poeta*, Venice, 1559, pp. 8, 9, and esp. p. 79: ‘Definitur poeta vir bonus dicendi atque imitandi peritus. . . . In qua definitione quod principiò ponitur, ipsaque natura potissimum est, ita præcipuum mihi videtur, ut non modò qui sit poeta, hunc virum bonum esse oporteat, sed ne futurus quidem sit poeta, nisi vir bonus.’ Cf. *infra*, 202. 18-25, and ii. 93. 28 sq.; also my *Lit. Crit. in the Ren.* p. 54.

PAGE 14. 12. Horace, *Sat.* ii. 1, 23.

PAGE 16. 6. Martial, vi. 17; vii. 64.

PAGE 16. 15-17. 20. All this re-appears in the *Discoveries* (*infra*, 19. 5-13, and 22. 11-23. 3). Cf. Quintilian, *Inst.* ii. 12. 1-3.

PAGE 17. 18. *Election and a meane*, i. e. selection and moderation, as opposed to mere *Copie*, i. e. copiousness; cf. Scaliger, *Poet.* v. 3, where the highest virtue of a poet is said to be *electio et sui fastidium*, and vi. 4, where it is said that the ‘life of all excellence lies in measure’.

PAGE 17. 21. *Timber, or Discoveries* appeared posthumously at the end of the second volume of the folio edition of 1640-41. Jonson’s version of Horace’s *Ars Poetica*, his *English Grammar*, and the *Discoveries* are paged consecutively in this edition, the last occupying pages 85-132; but each has a separate title-page, that of the *Discoveries* being as follows: ‘Timber, or Discoveries made upon men and matter, as they have flow’d out of his daily Readings, or had their reflux to his peculiar Notions of the



Times. By Ben: Johnson. *Tecum habita, ut noris quam sit tibi curta supellex*. Pers. Sat. iv. London, Printed M.DC.XLI.' The present text, based on this edition, is more conservative than that of other modern editors, who have modified such Elizabethan locutions as 'the owne graces' (26. 16). I have, however, omitted marginal references which merely repeat the proper names in the text. All passages bearing directly or indirectly on the criticism of literature (but only such) have been included.

In ascribing the *Discoveries* to the years 1620-35, I have followed the general consensus of Jonson scholars; but several passages undoubtedly go back to a period as early as 1605-15. There are parallels for some of these passages in other works of that period which would seem to bear the marks of artistic reworking, whether in expansion or compression, rather than of being cruder material; but on the other hand it is possible that, after the fire of 1623, Jonson started anew by collecting critical material from his earlier work. In the Introduction I have stated my opinion that the *Timber* was in the main a mere commonplace book, perhaps never intended for publication, and sufficient evidence for this theory is adduced in the notes which follow. For some of this material I am under obligations to the annotated edition of Professor Schelling (Boston, U. S. A., 1892), but I have not thought it necessary to cite at length his illustrations from the works of Cicero, Quintilian, Pliny, and Seneca. I have borrowed two or three references from the critical edition of M. Maurice Castelain (Paris, 1907), which appeared after the text had been printed off and while these notes were in proof: Jonson's borrowings from Heinsius and other continental critics had already been pointed out in my article on 'The Sources of Jonson's Discoveries' in *Modern Philology*, April, 1905.

PAGE 18. 10. L. Cestius Pius, the rhetorician; the allusion is to the elder Seneca, *Excerpta Controv.* iii. Procem. 15.

16. John Heath's *Two Centuries of Epigrammes* appeared in 1610.

17. *The Skullers Poems*. John Taylor, the Water Poet.

PAGE 19. 5-17. Cf. *supra*, 16. 25-17. 20, and note.

29-31. Cf. Seneca, *Excerpta Controv.* iv. Procem. 7 sq.

34 sq. An allusion to Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, iii. i. 47, which in the folio of 1623 reads:

'Know, Caesar doth not wrong, nor without cause  
Will he be satisfied.'

Cf. the induction of the *Staple of News*: 'Cry you mercy, you never did wrong but with just cause.' It remains a question whether Jonson, relying on his memory, has quoted this passage incorrectly, or whether Shakespeare was induced by Jonson's censure to alter the text.

PAGE 20. 5-12. Paraphrased from Quintilian, *Inst. Orat.* ii. 8. 1 sq.

PAGE 21. 11-16. A similar passage appears in Jonson's masque, *New World discovered in the Moon* (*Works*, ed. Cunningham, iii. 136). Mr. Swinburne rather rashly applies the passage to Samuel Daniel.

25. Cf. Sir John Daw's opinion of the Essayists in the *Silent Woman*, ii. 2 (*Works*, i. 416). Florio's translation of Montaigne appeared in 1603.

PAGE 22. 11-23. 3. Cf. *supra*, 16. 18-17. 20.

PAGE 23. 8. The first part of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* was acted in or before 1588. A play entitled *Tamer-cam* was acted by Henslowe's Company in 1592; the plot of the first part is printed in Boswell's *Malone*, iii. 356.

27. *Translated*, from Lat. *translatio*, or figurative expression.

PAGE 24. 19-26. 24. This is merely a cento of passages from Seneca, *Controv.* i. Procem. 13, 14, and iii. 1-10. The characterizations of the 'man vehement on all sides' and of Bacon as an orator are alike merely translations from this source. Montaigne paraphrases part of the same passage in his *Essays*, i. 10.

PAGE 26. 11. *One noble Speaker*, i. e. Francis Bacon.

27. Sir Thomas Smith (1513-1577); Sir Thomas Elyot (1499?-1546).

28. Stephen Gardner, Bishop of Winchester (1483-1555).

PAGE 27. 5. *Hath fill'd up all numbers*. Petronius, *Satyr.* 68 (cf. Saintsbury, *Hist. of Crit.* ii. 207, n.).

6-13. This passage is imitated from Seneca, *Controv.* i. Procem. 6-7. The comparison with 'insolent Greece or haughty Rome' occurs also in the famous lines to Shakespeare.

19. The *De Analogia*, Caesar's lost work on the Latin alphabet, words, and irregular inflexions, is described by Suetonius (*Caesar*, 56), Cicero (*Brutus*, 72), and Aulus Gellius (*Noct. Att.* xix. 8).

26. *A. P.* 346: 'Et longum noto scriptori prorogat aevum.'

PAGE 28. 3-13. Cf. Seneca, *Epist.* 104.

27. *Piety*. Orig. 'Poetry'.

PAGE 29. 6. Plutarch, *De Gloria Atheniensium*, 3, and *De Audiendis Poetis*, 3. This was a commonplace of Renaissance criticism: cf. Gregory Smith, *Eliz. Crit. Essays*, i. 158, and note.

PAGE 30. 6. Pliny, *Epist.* iv. 7.

23. *Recessor*. Schelling emends to 'recession', or background, as the analogous English form for the Latin *recessus* (cf. Cicero, *De Oratore*, iii. 26, and Scaliger, *Poet.* iii. 24: 'Nam plastæ & ij qui coloribus vtuntur, ex ipsis rebus capessunt notiones quibus lineamenta, lucem, vmbram, recessus imitentur').

PAGE 31. 11. *Sebastian of Venice*, i. e. Sebastiano del Piombo.

12. *Andrea Sartorio*, i. e. Andrea del Sarto. Some of the sources of information at Jonson's command for the history of painting are thus referred to by Peacham (*Compleat Gentleman*, 3rd ed. p. 154): 'If you would read the Lives at large of the most excellent Painters, as well Antient as Modern, I refer you unto the two volumes of *Vasari*, well written in Italian (which I have not seen, as being hard to come by, yet in the Libraries of two my especial and worthy friends, M. Doctor *Mountford*, late Prebend of *Pauls*, and M. *Inigo Jones*, Surveyor of his Majesties Works for Building), and *Calvin Mander*, in high *Dutch*, unto whom I am beholden for the greater part of what I have here written of some of their Lives. Among others, *Fran. Junius*, *de pictura veterum*, was not many years agoe Printed in *London*. And likewise my Book called the *Gentlemans Exercise*.'

13. The seventeen pages which follow (to 48. 22) constitute a more or less continuous discussion of prose style, borrowed for the most part from Quintilian (cf. especially, *Inst. Orat.* i. 1, 8, 12; ii. 4-8; iv. 2; viii. 3, 6; x. 1-3), Vives, and Justus Lipsius. Many extended passages are literally translated, and nearly every phrase is reminiscent of the original.

PAGE 32. 18. *Whether*, i. e. whither.

PAGE 34. 24. Cf. *Inst. Orat.* i. 8. 5-9.

PAGE 35. 1. The words in the margin refer to *Inst. Orat.* i. 1. 1-2.

PAGE 36. 7. The phrase is from Seneca, *Epist.* 36: 'Turpis et ridicula res est elementarius senex: juveni parandum, seni utendum est.'

34. *Inst. Orat.* i. 10. 1: 'Orbis doctrinae quam Graeci ἐγκύκλιον παιδείαν vocant.'

PAGE 37. 1. From Caesar's lost treatise *De Analogia*, cited by Cicero, *Brutus*, 72.

5 marg. Ludovicus Vives (1492-1540), the Spanish humanist: the reference is to his *De Ratione Dicendi*, Basle, 1537, from which the whole passage on language (36. 26-42. 31) is very largely borrowed.

8. *Translation or Metaphor*. Cf. Quintilian, viii. 6. 4: 'Translatio quae μεταφορά Graece vocatur.'

15. *Obsceneness*. Cunningham suggests 'obscurity'.

27-9. These three illustrations are borrowed from Quintilian, viii. 6. 15, 17. The first and second are cited by Cicero, *De Oratore*, iii. 41. 164; the third is attributed to Furius Bibaculus; cf. Seneca, *Suas*, i. 11, 12.

29 sq. Cf. Horace, *A. P.* 46 sq.

PAGE 38. 13. *Newest*. Orig. 'newness'.

22. *Aquai and pictai*. Cf. *Aeneid*, vii. 464, ix. 26.

PAGE 39. 26-30. Cf. Boswell's *Johnson*, ed. Hill, iv. 313: 'Sir, I have found you an argument; but I am not obliged to find you an understanding.'

PAGE 40. 5. *The Pearle in the Fable*. Phaedrus, iii. 12.

11-13. M. Annaeus Seneca, *Suasoria*, i. 11.

15. *Aeneid*, viii. 691, cited by Quintilian, viii. 6. 68.

21. A reminiscence of Caesar's *De Bello Hispaniensi*, 42.

PAGE 42. 32. Cf. *supra*, 1, 6-4. 9.

PAGE 44. 8. Cicero, *Brutus*, vi. 23.

PAGE 45. 1-48. 22. In these pages on the art of letter-writing, Jonson seems to follow more or less closely the *Epistolica Institutio* of Justus Lipsius (Castelain, pp. 110-116). But treatises on this art were very numerous in an age in which letter-writing was less a means than an end in itself (e.g. Poggio's *Modus Epistolandi*, Erasmus's *De Conscribendis Epistolis*, and

Sambucus' *Epistolarum Conscribendarum Methodus*): the source of most of their ideas is to be found in Demetrius Phalereus and Quintilian.

PAGE 46. 32. *Inst. Orat.* iv. 2, 41.

PAGE 47. 7. *Often times* (lost?). Swinburne's emendation.

PAGE 48. 14. *The Courtier*, i. e. Baldassare Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano*, written between 1514 and 1518, published in 1528, and translated by Hoby in 1561; examples of wit and humour are cited and discussed in book ii.

23. The remainder of the *Discoveries* constitutes a more or less fragmentary essay on poetry, in which Jonson has borrowed largely from contemporary continental (especially German and Dutch) scholars and critics. His chief obligation is to the famous Latinist, Daniel Heinsius (1580-1655), but he is also indebted for incidental suggestions to Scaliger (*Poetice*, 1561, 5th ed. 1617), Erasmus, and Jacobus Pontanus (*Poeticarum Institutionum libri tres*, Ingolstadt, 1594: an abstract of this treatise by J. Buchler, entitled *Reformata Poeseos Institutio*, was appended to his poetical dictionary, *Sacrarum Profanarumque Phrasium Poeticarum Thesaurus*, of which at least five editions were published in London during the seventeenth century).

PAGE 49. 3. The passage which follows (to 50. 9) is paraphrased from Erasmus, *Epistola Apologetica ad Martinum Dorpium* (Castelain, p. 117). The misquotation from St. Jerome's *Epist.* xlv. *ad Rusticum* (*Opera*, Paris, 1706, iv. 2. 771) is also from this source.

II. 'Sed quid opus teneras mordaci radere vero Auriculas?' Persius, *Sat.* i. 107.

PAGE 50. 25. *Aeneid*, iii. 288.

28. Martial, *Epig.* vii. 98.

PAGE 51. 3. *De Rerum Natura*, vi. 937.

8. The source of this passage is perhaps to be found in Buchler's abstract of Pontanus (*Phrasium Poeticarum Thesaurus*, 11th ed., London, 1632, p. 414): '*Quid distent Poëma & Poësis*. —Poëma est opus ipsum Poëtæ, id nimirum quod effectum est, finis & fructus operæ atque studij, quod impendit Poëta. Poësis est fictio ipsa, ratione ac forma Poëmatis, sive industria atque opera facientis: ut Poëma, Poësis, Poëta, hæc tria differunt, quo-



modo tres personæ verbi à quibus oriuntur, πεποίημαι, πεποίησαι, πεποίηται. A prima existit Poëma, ab altera Poësis, à tertia Poëta, quasi dicas factum, factio, factor; aut fictum, fictio, fictor . . . Poësis interdum ipsum etiam habitum seu artem, Poëticam videlicet ipsam declarat.' But the distinction between *poema*, *poeta*, *poesis*, and *poetice* was a commonplace of Alexandrian and Latin criticism at least as early as the time of Varro (*Saturarum Menippearum Reliquiae*, ed. Riese, p. 190); it appears, for example, in Plutarch, Hermogenes, Aphthonius, Diogenes Laertius, and Cornelius Fronto, and re-appears after the Revival of Learning in Scaliger, Maggi, Castelvetro, Vossius, and others to the very end of the seventeenth century (for the references, see my *Lit. Crit. in the Ren.* p. 27, n., and my article in *Modern Philology*, 1905, ii. 459, n.).

23. Cicero, *Pro Archia Poeta*, 7.

30 sq. Cf. Sidney's *Defence of Poesy* (Gregory Smith, i. 164, and note).

PAGE 52. 16-21. Jonson here has in mind Seneca, *De Tranquillitate Animi*, 15, but is apparently quoting from memory; his 'secundum Anacreontem' is more specific than Seneca's 'sive Graeco poetae credimus', and he has not literally reproduced Seneca's citations from Plato's *Ion* and Aristotle's *Poetics*, xvii. 2.

28. Ovid, *Fasti*, vi. 5.

29. Ovid, *Ars Amatoria*, iii. 550. Cf. Howell's letter to Jonson, 27 June 1629 (*Familiar Letters*, ed. Jacobs, p. 267).

30. Justus Lipsius (1547-1606); the reference is to his *Electorum Liber*, i. 5 (*Opera Omnia*, ed. 1629, i. 326).

33-35. Petronius, *Fragmenta*:

' Consules fiunt quotannis et novi proconsules;  
Solus aut rex aut poeta non quotannis nascitur.'

This is a favourite theme of Jonson; cf. the *Masque of Queenes* (*Shakesp. Soc. Publ.* xxxix. 66), Epigram 79, and the epilogue of the *New Inn*.

PAGE 53. 7 sq. From Quintilian, *Inst. Orat.* x. 3. 21.

15. Cf. Sidney's *Defence* (Gregory Smith, i. 159, 160, and esp. 182: 'One may bee a Poet without versing, and a versifyer without Poetry') and Ronsard's preface to the *Franciade*

(*Œuvres*, ed. Blanchemain, iii. 19, vii. 310: 'Tous ceux qui escrivent en carmes, tant doctes puissent-ils estre, ne sont pas poëtes,' etc.). The distinction goes back to Aristotle, *Poet.* i. 7-9 (cf. my *Lit. Crit. in the Ren.* pp. 35 sq., 270).

16 sq. Donatus, *De Virg. Vita*, 11.

20. Valerius Maximus, iii. 7.

PAGE 54. 3-10. Cf. Seneca, *Epist.* 84. These images were favourites in the Renaissance; Du Bellay and Montaigne have used them in famous passages.

15, 16. *Reading . . . maketh a full man.* The phrase is of course Bacon's, in the essay *Of Studies*; but the idea was widely diffused, e.g. Du Boscq, *L'Honneste Femme*, ed. 1643, p. 4: 'Il me semble que si la Conuersation donne la facilité, la Lecture donne l'abondance.'

20-3. Cf. Persius, prol. 1.

28. Cicero, *Pro Archia Poeta*, 7.

32. Stobaeus, *Florilegium*, ed. Meineke, ii. 352. The whole passage, with a translation, will be found in Saintsbury, *Hist. of Crit.* i. 25. Jonson seems to have derived the citation from Pontanus, *Inst. Poet.* 1594, p. 2 (Jonson's readings, γίγεται for γίγεται and πᾶν for πάλι, are also there); and in fact much of the context (pp. 52-54) appears to follow chapters viii, ix, and x of that work.

PAGE 55. 7-23. Jonson here literally reproduces a passage in Heinsius, *De Tragoediae Constitutione*, Leyden, 1611 (ed. 1643, pp. 3, 4): 'Primus Aristoteles, & quod Critici est accurati, vitia notauit: & quod veri est philosophi, è virtutibus multorum, vnam fecit artem: simulque vtrunque docuit; tum de aliis quid statuendum tum in nostris quid sequendum esset. Frustra tamen, ni ingenium accedat, sed poeticum in primis. Neque enim qui hæc sciet, ideo Tragœdiam conscribet: sed si aptus à natura ac ingenio accedat, ideo perfectam scribet. . . . Iam prudentia civilis, ubi magis requiritur? non in sententiis & gnomis modo: sed, quod felicissime à te præstitum meminimus non semel, cum consilia tractantur. non ex vmbra enim ad hæc accedebas: sed cum in Repub. versatus esses, quæ magnatum schola est.'

22. *But furnish'd.* Orig. 'furnish'd but'.

23 sq. Cf. Cicero, *De Oratore*, iii. 48, &c.

27 sq. Cf. Scaliger, *Poet.* i. 2.

PAGE 56. 6. This epitaph of Cnaeus Naevius is given by Aulus Gellius, i. 24, in a somewhat different form.

11. Quintilian, x. 1, 99.

13. Cited by Aulus Gellius, i. 24.

16. The page which follows (to 57. 3) is derived from Heinsius, *De Trag. Const.*, pp. 2, 3: 'Neque in ea sum opinione, vt ad eas, quas grammatici præscribunt, aut philosophi angustias, poëtæ libertatem esse revocandam arbitrer: cum præsertim ante obseruationes has summi in Tragœdia extiterint poëtæ: nemo enim postea ad maiestatem Sophocleam, meo quidem animo, accessit: quem non paucis annis ante Aristotelem, Philosophorum Regem fato suo functum satis constat. Verum idem aliis in artibus quoque vsu venit. Nam quis Græculorum vnquam qui dicendi traderent præcepta, ad diuinam & fatalem vim Demosthenis accessit, qui plerisque multo est antiquior? Nec Pericles ante eum, quem Olympium dixêre, quod tonare ac fulgurare videretur, neque Alcibiades, ac alii, quos ante hos fuisse in Republica disertos fama tenet, præceptorem potius quem sequerentur, quam naturam ducem habuerunt. Sed quæcumque aut felicibus natura dictat, aut exercitatio prolixa dat laboriosis, quod Latini nescio an satis recte habitum dixerint, in artem redigit vir sapiens & eruditus. Ita fit, vt & causas intelligat, & quæ forte alii efficiunt aut vsu, ex ratione agat: neque viam tantum ne aberret, sed & habeat compendium qua eat. Multa in Euripide facete Aristophanes notauit; neque ex arte sed è vero tamen. Sæpe Euripides, alibi quæ peccat, alibi plenissime & accuratè præstat: iudicium enim, etiam cum summum est, nisi ratio accedat, non est absolutum.'

PAGE 57. 4. *To judge of Poets is only the facultie of Poets.* This sentiment was widely diffused during the seventeenth century; e. g. Balzac, *Dissertation, ou Responses au R. P. André de Saint Denis*: 'Parlons serieusement, & disons qu'il n'appartient pas à tout le Monde de iuger des Poëtes. Pour cela il faut estre Poëte aussi bien qu'eux, & faut estre quelque chose de plus (*Socrate Chrestien & autres œuvres*, Paris, 1652, *Dissertations*, p. 160); cf. Denham's prologue to *The Sophy* ('Nothing should be the Judge of Wit but Wit'), and Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, 15-16. The ultimate source of the idea seems

to be the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, iv. 2 (but cf. Cicero, *Brutus*, 49-54).

The eighteenth century was not satisfied with this *a priori* contention. Warburton, in 1747, called it a 'silly maxim' (Nichol Smith, *Eighteenth Century Essays on Shakespeare*, p. 97), and Joseph Warton (*Essay on Pope*, 3rd ed. i. 113) says: 'It is somewhere remarked by Dryden, I think, that none but a poet is qualified to judge of a poet. The maxim is however contradicted by experience.'

PAGE 57. 12-16. From Heinsius, *Q. Horati Flacci Opera*, Leyden, 1612, *notae*, p. 98: 'Præsertim si cogitent, veri Critici esse, non literulam alibi eiicere, alibi innocentem syllabam & quæ nunquam male merita de patria fuerit, per jocum & ludum trucidare & configere; verum recte de autoribus & rebus judicare posse: quod & solidæ & absolutæ eruditionis est.'

22-8. These brief notes refer to the discussion of the satiric poets, Lucilius, Choerillus, and Laberius, in the treatise *De Satyra Horatiana* appended to Heinsius' *Horace*. The references in the margin are to an edition which I have not seen; but in that of 1612, Cato's defence of Lucilius (in the spurious lines prefixed to Horace, *Sat.* i. 10) is cited and discussed on pp. 165-166, and Quintilian's defence of the same poet on p. 166 sq.; Horace's opinion of Choerillus is defended against the attacks of Joseph Scaliger, and his opinion of Laberius against Julius Scaliger, on p. 167 sq.

23. From Suetonius, *De Illust. Gram.* xi.

29. The two pages which follow (to 59. 25) are translated from one of the notes in Heinsius' edition of Horace (Leyden, 1612, *notae*, p. 78 sq.): 'Durum equidem judicium, & quod non nemo hac ætate de leporum omnium parente excidissem nollet poetarum vaferrimo: cujus tamen vernæ melius de Plauto judicare poterant, quam qui hodie familiam in literis ducunt. Sed neque sæculi sui judicia ignorare potuit, homo principibus familiarior quam plebi, Mecænatis domesticus, Cæsari ita gratus, vt & lepidissimus homuncio creberrime ab eo diceretur, & ab epistolis habere eum optauerit. Qui cum contra tanti Terentij fabellas fecerit, vt integras ex ijs ῥήσεις propemodum descripserit, vbique accommodet, soli illi artem tribuat, hominis αἰθάρδους potius quam eruditi esset, ita dissentire a tanto viro, vt ne

causam quidem sibi cognoscendam existimaret. Quare videamus saltem quid adferri pro utroque possit. Ne aut Flaccum posthac viri docti in iudicio, aut Terentium in comœdia secure nimium damnare pergant. . . . Cum eædem propemodum comœdiæ ac tragœdiæ sint partes, finis quoque idem ex parte, ex parte diuersus, multa communia esse vtrique est necesse. Comœdia enim delectat & docet: neque minus comici διδάσκαλοι & κωμωδιδάσκαλοι quam tragici a Græcis dicuntur. Mouere autem risum non constituit comœdiam, sed aucupium est plebis, & abusus. Ridiculum enim, Aristotele definiente, *vitium est & fœditas doloris expers, quæ in homine partem aliquam absque morbo corrumpit*. Sicut facies fœda & detorta, si id absque dolore fiat, risum mouet. Vnde ipsum etiam risum, omnes fere antiquorum familiæ, sapiente indignum iudicabant. Plato tanquam sacrilegum Homerum accusat, quod ridentes faciat Deos. . . . Quare diuinitus ab Aristotele dictum est, partem turpitudinis esse, id quod est ridiculum. . . . Ita quæ in sensibus autorum & verbis, in sermone hominum & factis, detorta sunt ac deprauata, animos plebeios vehementer mouent, & hoc ipso risum excutunt. Ac propterea in veteri comœdia, dicta inusitata & obscena, cauillationes bonorum, singulorum contumeliæ, imitatio vel factis vel verbis, sententia peruersa, ideoque inexpectata, risum maxime expressit: quod paucissimi intelligunt, quia ridiculi naturam non vident. Cujus segetem largissimam Aristophanes suppeditat: qui non modo Plautum, sed quoscunque hac in parte superauit, & plenissime omnes τοῦ γελοίου figuras expressit. Denique, vt acetum nisi vinum sit corruptum, bonum esse non potest; ita quæ sincera sunt & vera, risum excitare non possunt. . . . Quis non ridet, quando Socrates ridetur, ipse pater omnium virtutum, & ipsa innocentia, cum in corbe philosophatur, cum geometrice quot pedes pulices saliant metitur? etc. Heinsius republished this note as a separate dissertation (*Ad Horatii de Plauto et Terentio iudicium dissertatio*) in his edition of Terence in 1635.

PAGE 58. 21-6. This astonishing statement is based on a misconception of Aristotle, *Poet.* v. 1: τοῦ αἰσχροῦ ἐστὶ τὸ γελοῖον μόριον· τὸ γὰρ γελοῖον ἐστὶν ἀμάρτημά τι καὶ αἷσχος ἀνῶδνον καὶ οὐ φθαρτικόν. Heinsius' statement is cited with approval by Corneille, in the dedication of his *Don Sanche*, 1650, and Jonson's version of it influenced English criticism for many years (e.g. Sprat,



*Hist. of Royal Society*, 1667, p. 418 ; Shadwell, prefaces to the *Sullen Lovers*, 1668, and the *Humorists*, 1671 ; Edward Howard, preface to *Women's Conquest*, 1671 ; Goldsmith, *Polite Learning*, 1759, ch. ix ; cf. Lessing, *Hamb. Dram.* nos. 28, 29). A not dissimilar conception may be found in Sidney's *Defence* (Gregory Smith, i. 199 : cf. Trissino, *Opere*, ed. 1729, ii. 127 sq.).

33. *Ethics*, iv. 9.

PAGE 59. 20. Aristophanes, *Clouds*, 217 sq.

24. *Ibid.* 144 sq.

28. Cf. Heinsius' ed. of Horace, 1612, *notae*, p. 80.

34, 35. Horace, *A. P.* 275 sq.

PAGE 60. 9. The remainder of the *Discoveries*, save the last five lines, reproduces the fourth chapter of Heinsius' *De Tragœdiae Constitutione*, Leyden, 1611 :

#### Cap. IV.

*Ambitus Tragœdiæ & magnitudo. Actio quæ tota & perfecta. Quæ sit Vna Actio : quot item modis dicatur Vnum. Quo modo in Tragœdia Vna requiratur Actio.*

Quemadmodum de ædificio qui cogitat, primo ei locum designare solet ; quem mox certa magnitudine ac ambitu definit : ita in Tragœdiæ, de qua nunc agimus, constitutione, à Philosopho est factum. Id in quo versatur Tragœdia, est actio. Sicut autem ædificio locus, sic Tragœdiæ accommodatur actio, magnitudine, ambitu, proportionem. Igitur vt aliam requirit magnitudinem vel regia vel aula, quam priuata domus ; ita aliam Tragœdia requirit actionem quam Epos. Nam cum vtriusque sit actio, sicut ibi vtriusque est locus ; spatio vtroque multum differunt ; hic actio, ibi locus. Jam vero, tum perfectæ tum totius actionis imitationem esse Tragœdiam, in definitione audiuius : ita vt perfectus ac totus ad ædificium requiritur locus. Perfectum autem id est, cui nihil deest : in loco quidem ædificii respectu, quod construitur : in Tragœdia autem actionis, quæ formatur : vt perfectus autem, non pro regia aut aula, quæ maiorem postulat, sed pro ædificio ipso, ædificii est locus : ita spatium actionis, non pro Epico opere immensum, sed pro Dramate ipso requiratur perfectum : id autem minus est. Jam vero totum est, quod principium, medium habet, & finem. Ita

ædificii locus est totus, quamuis minor sit quam aulæ: vt & Tragœdiæ actionem esse totam oportet, licet minor sit quam Epici. Sic perfectum animal est leo, quamuis multum cedat elephanto. Totum est leonis caput, licet minus sit quam vri aut tauri. Alteri enim differunt specie, & in sua absolutus est vterque: alterum partes habet suas, ideoque est totum. Sicut ergo omni in corpore, ita & in actione qualibet, quæ sit iusti poematis subjectum, certa magnitudine est opus; quæ nec vasta nec exigua sit nimis. Quippe id quod euenire oculis solet, corpus cum videmus, idem euenit memoriæ, cum actionem contemplamur: vastum enim corpus qui videt, dum in partibus quibusque hæret, totum illud vnicumque quod è partibus his ipsis constat, sequi intuitu non potest. In poemate, si magna nimium est actio, nemo totam simul cogitatione complectetur: contra si exile nimium est corpus, nulla ex intuitu illius oritur voluptas. Nulla enim datur contemplanti mora: quia simul sit intuitus & euanescit. Sicut qui formicam videt: nam cum partes fugiant conspectum, totum quoque prope est nullum. Idem fit in actione. Sicut enim ibi corpus oculorum, ita hic memoriæ objectum est actio: adde quod vt magna nimium, conspectum, ita & memoriam excedant: parua vix admittant. . . . . Primo enim crescere eo vsque recte ac produci posse, putat, donec pro earum quæ aguntur rerum ordine, vel necessario vel commode mutatio infertur: qui supremus hic est terminus: cum videlicet aut prospera in aduersam, aut aduersa in secundam mutatur fortuna. Sicut ergo corpus, sine magnitudine pulchrum esse non potest, ita neque actio Tragœdiæ. Et vt omnis qui pro rei natura est terminus, is habetur præstantissimus qui est maximus, donec crescere amplius non potest: ita ipsam crescere hactenus Tragœdiæ oportet actionem, donec necessario sit terminanda. In quo duo sunt tenenda. Primo vt vnus non excedat Solis ambitum. Secundo, vt digressioni locus relinquatur & arti. Quippe quod in domo est supellex cæteraque ornamenta, hoc in Tragœdia digressiones sunt & Episodia. Hactenus ergo, quantam esse Fabulam, Tragœdiæ oporteat & actionem. Videndum & illud; vtrum vnam. Vnum duobus dicitur, vt plurimum, modis. Vel quod vnicum est, separatum, ac simplex, vt ante. Vel id quod compositum ex pluribus, postquam plura illa jam coaluerunt, vnum esse cœpit. Priori

modo, vnam esse oportere Fabulam, nemo eruditus dixerit. Duo quippe in Tragica requiri actione jam monuimus: magnitudinem vt justam, ita & æqualem inter sese proportionem partium, quorum neutrum, si sit vna actio ac simplex, non composita ex partibus, quæ tum ad eundem tendunt finem, tum proportionem apta ac æquali inter sese componuntur, posse fieri videtur: quæ res plurimis ex ipsa antiquitate imposuit, etiamque hodie imponit. Sic non pauci olim arbitrati sunt, vnus actionem esse vnam. Puta Herculis, Thesei, Achillis, Vlyssis, & aliorum. Quod ineptum est ac falsum: cum ab vno eodemque multa fieri omnino possint, quæ coniungi & referri ad eundem finem commode non possunt. Quod non modo Tragici præstantes, verum & poëtæ Epici, Homerus pariter ac Maro, viderunt. Quanquam enim longe amplius diffusiusque Epici quam Tragici sit argumentum, tamen plurima Æneæ Maro prætermisit. Non enim, quomodo sit natus ac eductus, cum Achille quomodo conflixerit, ac prælio ereptus fuerit à Venere: vnum hoc, quo pacto in Italiam peruenerit, libris duodecim, quod nemo nescit, persecutus est. Reliqua quippe, de itinere, vrbis expugnatione, aliaque, non vt argumentum operis, sed vt argumenti Episodia ponuntur: quemadmodum & Vlyssis plurima Homerus prætermisit: neque plura, quam quæ tendere ad eundem ac spectare finem videbantur, conjunxit. Contra ineptissime poëtæ, quos Philosophus recenset: quorum alter omnes Thesei, alter Herculis labores actionesque fuerat complexus. Neque aliter intelligendus ille Juuenalis locus est de Codro: quem idcirco raucum ibi dixit, quod immensum opus, in quo omnes Thesei recenserentur actiones, summa cum & auditorum molestia & sua, recitaret: inter quas fuisse sane plurimas oportet, quæ nil inter se commune haberent: quare neque vnam siue actionem siue fabulam subjectum operis habebat, sed vnus. Cæterum vt domus non ex vno constat sed est vna: ita non ex vno constat, etiam si vna, actio Tragœdiæ, . . . . Exempli gratia, Sophoclis Ajacem videamus: Ajax armis priuatus, indignatur, & vt erat contumeliæ impatiens, rabit ac furit. Ergo, quod pro tali est, haud pauca sine mente agit, & postremo pro Vlysse pecudes insanus mactat: vbi autem ad se rediit, opprobrii pertæsus, manus sibi infert, ac sepulchro prohibetur: quæ, non autem cætera, quæcunque toto vitæ tem-

pore ab Ajace gesta, apte inter se cohærent. Sed nec quælibet ex illis per se sufficit: omnes vero congruentes, vnam illam statuunt cujus sunt partes. Quippe & totam debere esse actionem diximus, & absolutam. Totum autem vt ex partibus constat, neque sine omnibus partibus est totum, ita vt sit absolutum, non modo omnes requiruntur partes, sed & tales quæ sunt veræ. Totius autem pars est vera, quam si tollas, aut mouetur totum, aut non amplius est totum. Nam quod tale est, vt siue absit, siue adsit, plane ad totum nil intersit, pars totius dici proprie non potest. Qualia sunt Episodia, de quibus postea agemus: vel ejusdem actiones longe diuersæ. Sic, exempli gratia, singulare Ajacis cum Hectore certamen, quod prolixè describitur Homero, ad Ajacem Sophoclis non spectat' (ed. 1643, pp. 28-38).

PAGE 63. 7. *Hoarse Codrus*. Juvenal, *Sat.* i. 2, iii. 203.

## JOHN WEBSTER (1580?-1625?)

PAGE 65. 3. Martial, xiii. 2. 8.

13. Martial, iv. 87. 7-8.

15 sq. This paragraph should be compared with the contemporary utterance of Lope de Vega, in his *Arte Nuevo de hacer comedias* (1609), the opening lines of which are thus rendered by Professor Rennert: 'Noble wits, the flower of Spain, you ask me to compose for you a treatise on the Art of making Plays, which may be acceptable to the public of the present day. Easy this subject appears, and easy it would be for any one of you who has written less comedias than I and who knows more about the art of writing them. But what is a disadvantage to me in this matter is that I have written them against the rules of art. Not that I was ignorant of these precepts, for while still a tiro in Grammar I read the books which treat of them, yes, even before I was ten years old. I did it because I found that at that time the comedias in Spain were not as their first inventors thought they should be written, but rather as they were treated by the barbarians who accustomed the vulgar to their crudities; and so they introduced them in such a way

that he who would now write according to the rules of art would die without fame and without reward, for custom is more powerful than reason in those who lack reason's light. True it is that I have sometimes written according to the rules that are known to few. But as soon as I see the monsters, full of apparitions, come forth, to which flock the public and the women, who canonize this sad spectacle, then forthwith do I return to my barbarous custom; and when I have to write a comedia, I lock up the precepts with six keys, cast Terence and Plautus from my study, so that they may not cry out (for truth is wont to speak aloud even in mute books), and I write according to the art invented by those who sought the vulgar applause. For, as the common herd pays for them, it is meet to speak to them like an ignoramus, in order to please them' (H. A. Rennert, *Life of Lope de Vega*, 1904, pp. 178-190; cf. the annotated edition of the *Arte Nuevo* by A. Morel-Fatio, in the *Bulletin Hispanique*, 1901, iii. 365, and A. Farinelli's review in the *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen*, cix. 458). An interesting French parallel is to be found in the preface to Rayssiguier's version of the *Aminta*, 1632, where the classical and the romantic dramas are alike defended, the former because in following the ancients it is impossible to transgress common sense, and the latter 'parce que la plus grande part de ceux qui portent le teston à l'Hôtel de Bourgogne veulent que l'on contente leurs yeux par la diuersité & changement de la face du Theatre, & que le grand nombre des accidens leurs ostent la cognoissance du sujet, ainsi ceux qui veulent faire le profit & l'aduantage des messieurs qui recitent leurs vers sont obligez d'escire sans obseruer aucune regle.'

16. Martial, xiii. 2. 4-5.

20. *All the critical laws*. Cf. *supra*, 10. 6-21, and notes.

23. Horace, *Epode* iii. 4.

27. Horace, *Epist.* i. 7. 19.

PAGE 66. 4. Cf. *supra*, 53. 20, and note.

25. Martial, x. 2. 12.



## GEORGE CHAPMAN (1559?-1634)

The text of these two prefaces follows that of the *Whole Works of Homer* (1616? British Museum press-mark, 11315. i. 6). The second preface appeared in *Homer, Prince of Poets, translated according to the Greek in twelve bookes of his Iliads* (1610? B. M. press-mark, C 39. g. 24), and both prefaces appeared in the *Iliads* printed for N. Butter (1611? B. M., 1348. k. 15) and in the *Whole Works* (1612? B. M., G 8837(1)).

PAGE 67. 2. Josephus, *Contra Apionem*, i. 2.

3. Velleius Paterculus, *Hist. Rom.* i. 5.

6. Spondanus, i.e. Jean de Sponde (1557-95), a French scholar, to whose *Homeri quae extant opera . . . cum Latina versione . . . perpetuis item commentariis*, first published at Basle in 1583, Chapman is much indebted throughout.

21. Pseud. Plutarch, *De Vita et Poesi Homeri*, ii. 1.

PAGE 70. 1. Thomas Harriot (1560-1621), mathematician and astronomer.

12. Robert Hues (1553?-1632), geographer.

20. Laurentius Valla, i.e. Lorenzo Valla (1406-57), the distinguished Italian humanist, author of the *Elegantiae*; his Latin version of the *Iliad* was begun in 1447, and was first printed in 1474 (*Homeri Poetarum Supremi Ilias . . . in Latinum sermonem traducta*).

20. Eobanus Hessus (1488-1540), German humanist: the reference is to his *Poetarum omnium seculorum longe principis Homeri Ilias . . . iam recens Latino carmine reddita*, Basle, 1540.

29. *Iliad*, iii. 403 sq.

PAGE 71. 1. This text differs considerably from that of the original (Spondanus, *op. cit.*, ed. 1583, p. 59, and ed. 1606, p. 59).

9. Valla, *ed. cit.*, fol. 23<sup>v</sup> (unnumbered).

PAGE 72. 4. *A. P.* 133 sq.

19. *Enuius Windsucker*. Ben Jonson?

PAGE 73. 34. Richard Stapilton contributed commendatory verses to Chapman's *Ovid's Banquet of Sense*, 1595.

PAGE 74. 15. Martial, vii. 63, vi. 64.

PAGE 75. 20. *Angelus Politianus*, i.e. Angelo Poliziano, the great Italian poet and humanist (1454-98). The *Nutricia* is the

first of the *Sylvae*, four hexameter poems devoted to the history and criticism of poetry: this passage will be found in Pope's *Selecta Poemata Italorum*, London, 1740, ii. 116.

PAGE 77. 5 sq. Chapman is here glancing at Jonson and his school of 'word-for-word traductions'. On the significance of this passage see the Introduction.

PAGE 78. 6. *The Messines*, i. e. Paolo Badessa of Messina, who translated the first five books of the *Iliad* in *versi sciolti* (*L'Iliade d'Homero tradotta in lingua italiana per Paolo Badessa Messinese*, Padua, 1564).

8. Hugues Salel (1504?-1553), whose version of the first ten books of the *Iliad* appeared in 1545 (*Les dix premiers livres de l'Iliade d'Homère, prince des poètes, traduits en vers français*), and was later completed by Olivier de Magny and Amadys Jamyn.

20. On these 'mysteries', cf. Reynolds' *Mythomystes*, *infra*.

PAGE 79. 5 sq. Cf. Sidney, in Gregory Smith, *Eliz. Crit. Essays*, i. 204, 205, and the concluding stanzas of Daniel's *Musophilus*.

### EDMUND BOLTON (1575?-1633?)

The *Hypercritica* was completed c. 1618, but was first printed by Anthony Hall, at the end of his *Nicolai Triveti Annalium Continuatio*, Oxford, 1722: this is the source of the present text. It has been here reprinted *in extenso*, in part as a heritage of Haslewood, who included it in the second volume of his *Ancient Critical Essays upon English Poets and Poesy*, 1815, and so foredoomed it to inclusion in a series which professes to supersede his work. Of the four 'addresses' into which the *Hypercritica* is divided, only about half the last is directly concerned with literary criticism. The text has therefore been most sparingly annotated; and all names casually referred to in the historical portions have been neglected in the notes.

The work in the main is a contribution to the theory of historical method, as introduced into Elizabethan England from Italy and modified by Jacobean erudition. During the second half of the sixteenth century, formal treatises on the writing of history had come forth in great numbers from the Italian presses (e. g. Robortelli's *De Historiae Facultate*, 1548, Patrizzi's *Della Istoria*,

1560, Viperano's *De Historia Scribenda*, 1569, Riccoboni's *De Historia*, 1568, Toscanella's *Trattato in Materia di scrivere Storia*, 1567, Ammirato's *Discorsi sopra Cornelio Tacito*, 1594, Ducci's *Ars Historica*, 1604, Beni's *De Historia Scribenda*, 1611, and Mascardi's *Dell' Arte Storica*, 1636): these formed the historical tastes and methods of Europe, and, more particularly, serve to explain the purpose and theory of Bolton's work (cf. Maffei, *I Trattati dell' Arte Storica dal Rinascimento al secolo xvii*, Naples, 1897). The most significant of these treatises, Patrizzi's, was translated into English in 1574 by Thomas Blundeville, as *The True Order and Method of writing and reading Histories* (cf. Einstein, *Italian Renaissance in England*, 1902, pp. 307-15). In France, Bodin's *Methodus ad facilem Historiarum Cognitionem*, 1566, and La Popelinière's *Histoire des Histoires, avec l'Idée de l'Histoire accomplie, plus le dessein de l'Histoire nouvelle des François*, 1599, had introduced the historical ideas of the Italians: the former of these works is cited by Bolton, and the latter has many points of contact with the *Hypercritica*. In Spain, Fox Morcillo's *De Historiae Institutione*, 1557, Costa's *De Conscribenda Historia*, 1591, and Cabrera's *De Historia*, 1611, exhibit similar influences. Eighteen treatises on the science of history were collected in the *Artis Historicae Penus*, Basle, 1579.

PAGE 83. 3. Polydore Virgil (d. 1555), author of *Historiae Anglicae Libri xxvi*, 1534.

4. *Paulus Æmilius*, i. e. Paolo Emilio (d. 1529), an Italian historiographer of the French court, author of *De Rebus Gestis Francorum*, 1516-39.

12. Sir Henry Savile (1549-1622), warden of Merton College, Oxford, and provost of Eton: his translation of the first four books of Tacitus appeared in 1591.

PAGE 84. 20, 21. Trajano Boccalini (1556-1613), author of the *Ragguagli di Parnaso*, 1612-13, more or less after the manner of Lucian: for his opinion of Tacitus see *Ragguagli*, i. 86; his more extended *Commentari* on Tacitus did not appear until 1669. His literary influence is discussed in the Introduction.

24. Tertullian (? 160-240), in his *Apologeticus*, xvi, and *Ad Nationes*, xi, controverts the biassed account of the Jews which Tacitus gives in the fifth book of his *Histories*.

24. Paulus Orosius (*fl.* 5th cent.), author of *Historiarum adversus Paganos libri vii*.

25. Isaac Casaubon (1559-1614).

PAGE 85. 3. Philippe de Commines (*c.* 1445-1509): his *Memoires* were published in 1524.

13. Lucian, *Vera Historia*, ii. 31.

20. Velleius Paterculus, *Hist. Rom.* ii. 46, 47.

27. Galfridus, i. e. Geoffrey of Monmouth (*d.* 1154), author of the *Historia Britonum*.

PAGE 87. 32. Ammianus Marcellinus, xv. 9.

PAGE 88. 2. *Pharsalia*, i. 447-9.

15. Sallust, *Jugurtha*, 17.

31. *Ibid.*

PAGE 89. 6. Tacitus, *Germania*, 3.

PAGE 91. 6. Arrian, *Anabasis*, iii. 3. 2; iv. 9. 9.

9. Lucian, *Dial. of the Dead*, x. 4. 1.

10. St. Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, iii. 4.

PAGE 92. 6. Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, iii. 17.

PAGE 93. n. 1. *Annal.* iv. 34.

PAGE 98. 13. *St. Alban*, i. e. Francis Bacon.

13. George Carew, Baron Carew of Clopton, and Earl of Totnes (1555-1629).

14. Sir Robert Bruce Cotton (1571-1631), antiquary.

14. Sir Henry Spelman (1564?-1641), historian and antiquary.

14. *Doctor Bar.*, i. e. John Barkham, or Barcham (1572?-1642), antiquary and historian.

15. *Edmund B.*, i. e. Bolton himself.

16, 17. Martial, v. 51. 7.

28. Cicero, *De Orat.* ii. 9. 36.

PAGE 99. 20. Lucian, *Quomodo Historia Scribenda sit*, 34.

PAGE 100. 5. Virgil, *Georg.* ii. 490.

17. Juvenal, iv. 127.

18. Bede, *Hist. Eccles.* i. 4; Freculphus, Bishop of Lisieux (*d.* 850), author of *Chronicorum libri duo*, in Migne, *Patrol. Lat.* cvi. 915 sq.

PAGE 105. 8. George Buchanan (1506-1582): his *Rerum Scotticarum Historia* appeared in 1582.

PAGE 106. 20. Vopiscus, *Aurel.* ii. (*Historiae Augustae Scriptores*).

PAGE 108. 21. William Allen (1532-94).

23. Robert Parsons, or Persons (1546-1610), Jesuit missionary and controversialist.

28 sq. The allusion is to Francis Bacon's *Apologie . . . concerning the late Earle of Essex*, 1604.

PAGE 109. 4. Sir John Hayward (1564?-1627), author of the *First Part of the Life and Raigne of Henrie the IIII*, 1599-1601.

PAGE 111. 18. The collected works of James I were edited by Bishop Montagu in 1616.

PAGE 112. 19. Lucian, *Pseudologista*, xiv sq.

PAGE 113. 8. *Thuanus*, i. e. Jacques-Auguste de Thou (1553-1617), author of *Historia sui temporis*, 1604 sq.

PAGE 115. 1. Dion Cassius, the historian, was Consul c. 220 and c. 229.

## HENRY PEACHAM (1576?-1643?)

The text follows the reading of the first edition of *The Compleat Gentleman*, 1622, pp. 78-96; in the later editions there are considerable variations and additions. The tenth chapter, the only one concerned with Poetry, is given *in extenso*: it is little more than a *résumé* of the first book of Puttenham's *Arte of English Poesie*, 1589, and of the sixth book of Scaliger's *Poetice*, 1561 (5th ed. 1617).

PAGE 117. 1, 2.

3. Strabo, *Geog.* i. 2. 3: οἱ παλαιοὶ φιλοσοφίαν τινὰ λέγουσι πρῶτον τὴν ποιητικὴν.

5 sq. Peacham here follows Puttenham: cf. Gregory Smith, *Eliz. Crit. Essays*, ii. 6 sq. and notes.

9. Virgil, *Aen.* i. 742 sq.

15. Lucretius, i. 935 sq. This image is borrowed by Tasso, *Gerusalemme Liberata*, c. i. st. 3, which Sir John Harington cites and translates in the preface to his version of Ariosto, 1591 (Gregory Smith, *op. cit.* ii. 199).

25. St. Hilary (*d.* 367), bishop of Poitiers.

PAGE 118. 1. *Epiphonema* 'is a figure, when after a thing is



done or declared, a clause or part of a sentence is added, briefly purporting some Emphasis, and the speaker's censure of the thing so done or declared' (John Smith, *The Mysterie of Rhetorique Unvail'd*, 1657, p. 143).

1. *Prosopopoeia*, 'a figurative exornation, when in our speech what thing soever, which is not a person, is Metaphorically brought and represented as a person' (*ibid.* p. 153).

6-9. Aratus, in Acts xvii. 28; Menander, in 1 Cor. xv. 33; Epimenides, in Titus i. 12.

26 sq. Plutarch, *De Mulierum Virtutibus*, iv. Argivae.

PAGE 119. 3. Plutarch, *Alexander*, 8.

5. Plutarch, *Cleomenes*, 2.

13. Cf. *supra*, 88. 2.

24 marg. *Panormitan[us]*, i.e. Antonio Beccadelli, sur-named Panormita (1394-1471), author of the *Hermaphroditus*; his treatise, *De dictis et factis Alphonsi regis utriusque Siciliae et Aragoniae libri iv*, was printed at Pisa in 1485.

27 sq. Charles VI was King of France 'twelve years' after Petrarch's death, but the incident here described seems more in keeping with the character of Charles V (1337-1380). Francis I wrote an inscription for Laura's tomb (cf. Cousin, *La Société française au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, ii. 421). On Petrarch's tomb and its inscriptions, see Tomasini, *Petrarcha Redivivus*, 1635, p. 176 sq.

PAGE 120. 3-10. Cf. Puttenham, in Gregory Smith, ii. 17.

11-17. Cf. *ibid.* ii. 20. In Bouchet's *Annales d'Aquitaine* (1524), which gave the story currency, the heroine is the Dauphiness, Marguerite of Scotland.

PAGE 121. 4. Scaliger, *Poet.* iii. 24.

11. *The Prince of learning*, i.e. Scaliger; the reference is given in the margin.

PAGE 122. 13 sq. The passage on 'efficacy' and the Virgilian illustrations are borrowed from Scaliger, *Poet.* iii. 26.

PAGE 123. 35 marg. Pseud. Plutarch, *De Vita et Poesi Homeri*, lxxiii.

PAGE 125. 26. *Tristia*, iv. 10. 51.

PAGES 125. 30-126. 9. Taken from Scaliger, vi. 7. Parthenius of Nicea (*fl.* end of first century B. C.) wrote a work, entitled *Metamorphoses*, which is now lost.

PAGE 126. 10 marg. Laurentius Surius (1522-1578), a German

ecclesiastical writer: his *Commentarius brevis rerum in orbe gestarum ab anno MD* appeared originally in 1566, and was continued to 1586 by the Dutch historian Michael van Isselt. Peacham's reference is to the Cologne edition of 1586 and to van Isselt's continuation: there the 'certain young gentleman' is identified as one 'Wonuskus', and further information as to his literary studies is given.

PAGES 127. 1-128. 21. From Scaliger, vi. 5-7.

PAGE 127. 6. *Inst. Or.* x. 1. 94.

PAGE 128. 22-8. Cf. Scaliger, vi. 2, and Quintilian, x. 1. 99.

PAGE 129. 3. *Beza*, i.e. Théodore de Bèze (1519-1605), the celebrated Protestant theologian.

II. Beatus Rhenanus (1485-1547), German humanist.

PAGE 130. 24. *Budæus*, i.e. Guillaume Budé (1467-1540), the distinguished French Hellenist: he contributed a preface to the third edition of the *Utopia* in 1518.

PAGES 131. 3-133. 35. Peacham's discussion of English poetry is based on that of Puttenham (Gregory Smith, ii. 61-66).

## MICHAEL DRAYTON (1563-1631)

This *Epistle* first appeared in *The Battaile of Agincourt... The Miseries of Queene Margarite... Nymphidia, the Court of Fayrie... Elegies upon sundrie occasions* (1627), from which the present text has been transcribed.

PAGE 134. 19. *Pueriles*, i.e. the *Sententiae Pueriles*, a little manual of Latin sentences used in the Elizabethan schools. It was originally compiled by Leonhard Culmann, and appeared at Leipzig in 1544, under the title of *Sententiae Pueriles pro primis Latinae linguae Tyronibus, ex diversis scriptoribus collectae*; it was entered on the Stationers' Registers in 1569-70 (Arber, i. 418); and at least two separate English translations were published in the seventeenth century.

PAGE 135. 1. *Cato*, i.e. the *Disticha de Moribus*, ascribed to Cato the Elder, which served as an elementary textbook in the mediaeval as well as the Elizabethan curriculum. The Farmer in Peele's *Edward I*, sc. xii, confuses it with the *Sententiae*

*Pueriles*, and ascribes to it a sentence found in neither of these works, but in Lily's *Grammar* ('Tis an old saying, I remember I read it in Cato's *Pueriles*, that *Cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator*').

17. *Mantuan*, i. e. Battista Spagnuoli (1448-1516), surnamed Mantuanus after his birthplace; his *Eclogues* were used in the English schools (cf. T. S. Baynes, *Shakespeare Studies*, 1894), and Holofernes quotes them with gusto in *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 2. 95.

23. William Elderton (*d.* 1592?), a popular ballad-writer; the opening of one of his ballads is quoted in *Much Ado about Nothing*, v. 2.

PAGE 136. 13. *Brian*, i. e. Sir Francis Bryan (*d.* 1550).

PAGE 137. 1-7. Sidney's strictures on Euphuism may be found in the *Defence of Poetry* (Gregory Smith, i. 203) and in the third sonnet of *Astrophel and Stella*.

PAGE 138. 28. Guillaume de Salluste, sieur du Bartas (1544-1590), began the publication of his *Semaines* in 1579, and the versions of Sylvester first appeared in 1592.

33. *Sands*, i. e. George Sandys (1578-1644).

PAGE 139. 28 sq. Mr. E. K. Chambers suggests that these lines refer to the poems of Donne, then circulating in MS.

## HENRY REYNOLDS (fl. 1627-1633)

The original edition of *Mythomystes* is undated, but the work was entered on the Stationers' Registers August 12, 1632.

The theory of mystical interpretation with which the book is saturated, and which Reynolds chiefly derived from Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494: cf. Massetani, *La Filosofia Cabbalistica di G. Pico della Mirandola*, 1897), was one of the will o' the wisps of English thought throughout the seventeenth century (cf. Bacon's *De Sapientia Veterum*, Alexander Ross's *Mel Heliconium* and *Mystagogus Poeticus*, and Henry More's *Conjectura Cabbalistica* and *Defence of the Threefold Cabbala*), and was ridiculed in the 221st *Spectator*.

PAGE 146. 12. The *Celestina*, or *Tragicomedia de Calisto y*

*Melibea*, a play or novel in dialogue, in twenty-one acts, by Fernando de Rojas, was first published at Burgos in 1499. Mabbe's English version (1631) was doubtless fresh in Reynolds's mind.

13. The *Diana*, a Spanish pastoral romance by the Portuguese, Jorge de Montemayor (*d.* 1561), was published c. 1558-9, and translated into English by Bartholomew Young in 1583 (publ. 1598).

18. *Lazarillo de Tormes*, a Spanish picaresque novel, attributed to Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, appeared in 1554, and David Rowland's English version in 1576.

18. The *Vida del Picaro Guzman de Alfarache*, by Mateo Alemán, appeared in 1599, and was translated by Mabbe in 1622. On the Spanish picaresque novel in general, see F. W. Chandler, *Romances of Roguery*, 1899.

21. Pierre de Ronsard (1524-1585); Philippe Desportes (1546-1606).

29. Pietro Bembo (1470-1547).

29. Cesare Caporali (1531-1601), the author of *Il Viaggio di Parnaso*, *Gli Avvisi di Parnaso*, and other poems in which classical history and mythology are employed for the purpose of literary satire: he influenced Boccalini and Cervantes.

30. Pietro Aretino (1492-1556); Jacopo Sannazaro (1458-1530), author of the *Arcadia*; Battista Guarini (1538-1612), author of the *Pastor Fido*.

PAGE 147. 3. The *Adone* of Giovan Battista Marino (1569-1625) was published at Paris in 1623.

25. *Their honest Authour*, i. e. Michael Drayton.

PAGE 149. 1, 2. *A late traauiling Odcombian*, i. e. Thomas Coryate (1577?-1617), the traveller, born at Odcombe, Somerset.

PAGE 150. 30. Ovid, *Fasti*, vi. 5.

PAGE 152. 20 marg. *Natalis Comes*, i. e. Natale Conti (*d.* 1582): the reference is to his *Mythologiae, sive Explicationes Fabularum, libri x*, Venice, 1551.

30 sq. Pico della Mirandola, *Opera Omnia*, Basle, 1572, i. 124.

33 marg. Paulus Jovius, i. e. Paolo Giovio (1483-1552), author of *Elogia Virorum Illustrium*.

34 marg. Beroaldus, i. e. Filippo Beroaldo (1483-1505).

PAGE 153. 20. *Farra, the learned Alexandrian*, i. e. Alessandro Farra, author of *Settenario, nel quale si discorre e mostra con nobilissime e dottissime considerazioni l'innalzarsi che fa l'anima alla contemplazione di Dio*, Venice, 1594, and of *Tre Discorsi* on the miracles of love, the divinity of man, and the office of a captain, Pavia, 1564. An account of him will be found in Ghilini, *Teatro d'Huomini Letterati*, 1647, i. 7.

PAGE 154. 15. From Petrarch's sonnet, beginning 'La gola e'l sonno e'l oziose piume'.

PAGE 156. 27 sq. Pico della Mirandola, *op. cit.* i. 124.

PAGE 157. 13. The *Ambra*, the fourth of Poliziano's *Sylvae*, is devoted to the praise of Homer (cf. *supra*, note to 75. 20).

26. *Noct. Att.* xx. 5.

PAGE 158. 25. Sylvester's *Du Bartas*, ed. 1641, p. 141. The 'Columnes' forms the fourth part of the second day of *Du Bartas's* second *Week*.

33. *Probl.* xxx. 6.

PAGE 159. 1. Albumazar (776-885), the Arabian astronomer: his chief works were published in Latin versions at the end of the fifteenth century.

6. Rabanus Maurus (776-856), the disciple of Alcuin: his collected works appeared at Cologne in 1617.

PAGE 163. 35. Vittoria Colonna (1490-1547): the verses cited occur in one of her religious sonnets (*Rime di tre Gentildonne del secolo XVI*, Milan, 1882, p. 101).

PAGE 165. 19 sq. The allusion is to Chapman; but cf. *supra*, 78. 20 sq.

PAGE 168. 13. Pausanias, *Descr. Graec.* ix. 30. 4.

16. Eusebius Pamphilus (265-340), in his *Praeparatio Evangelica*, xiii. 12, 664 d.

PAGE 175. 33. Virgil, *Georg.* i. 125.

PAGE 176. 4. Virgil, *Aen.* vi. 274.

PAGE 177. 16 sq. Cf. *supra*, 8. 17 sq.

PAGE 178. 14. Ovid, *Amores*, i. 5. 35.

15. A saying of M. Crassus, reported by St. Jerome, *Epist.* vii. (*Opera*, ed. 1706, t. iv. pt. ii. p. 14).

PAGE 179. 34. Maximus Tyrius, *serm.* viii.



## SIR WILLIAM ALEXANDER, EARL OF STIRLING (1567 ?-1640)

The *Anacrisis* was published for the first time in the folio edition of the *Works* of William Drummond of Hawthornden, Edinburgh, 1711, and the present text has been transcribed from that edition.

PAGE 182. 13 sq. *I compare a Poem to a Garden*. This image seems to have been a commonplace of neo-classic criticism: cf. Vauquelin de la Fresnaye, *Art Poétique*, 1605, i. 21 sq., and Flecknoe, 1664, in vol. ii. p. 93.

PAGE 183. 14. Scaliger, *Poet.* vi. 6: 'Interdum mihi latrare, non canere videtur' (ed. 1617, p. 778).

18-24. Martial, vii. 21, 22.

PAGE 184. 19. *Aen.* xii. 930 sq.

28 sq. Livy, xlv. 39.

PAGE 185. 6. *Gerusalemme Liberata*, xx. 104 sq.

10. See note to ii. 280. 29.

14. Tasso's 'Week of the Creation', *Le Sette Giornate del Mondo Creato*, was published posthumously in 1607.

PAGE 188. 10. See note to 146. 13.

10. *Astrea*, i. e. *L'Astrée*, a pastoral romance by Honoré d'Urfé (1568-1625), the first part of which appeared in 1610.

29. John Barclay (1582-1621): the *Argenis*, a Latin satire on contemporary politics, was published in 1621, and was translated into English, French, and Italian.

## SIR JOHN SUCKLING (1609-1642)

*A Sessions of the Poets* was first published in *Fragmenta Aurea: A Collection of all the Incomparable Peeeces written by Sir John Suckling, and published by a Friend to perpetuate his memory: Printed by his owne Copies*, 1646, pp. 7-11: this is the source of the present text. The poem was apparently written between August 6, 1637, the date of Jonson's death, and December 13, 1638, when Davenant was made poet laureate.

PAGE 190. 10. John Selden (1584-1654).

11. Sir Francis Wenman, an Oxfordshire gentleman; like

Hales, Suckling, Waller, Chillingworth, Godolphin, and the others mentioned in this poem, a member of the coterie of Lord Falkland: there is an account of him and of the other members of the circle in Clarendon's *Life*, Oxford, 1827, i. 42 sq. (cf. Marriott, *Life and Times of Falkland*, 1907, pp. 82-97).

12. *Sands*. Cf. 138. 33, and note.

12. Aurelian Townsend, author of *Albion's Triumph* and *Tempe Restored*, 1632.

13. Sir Kenelm Digby (1603-1665).

13. *Shillingsworth*, i. e. William Chillingworth (1602-1644), theologian.

15. *Lucan's Translator*, i. e. Thomas May (1595-1650); his version of the *Pharsalia* appeared in 1628.

15-16. Mr. W. C. Hazlitt suggests that Quarles is here referred to; but that poet was not a member of the Falkland coterie.

17. Edmund Waller (1606-1687). The original reads 'Walter'.

17. William Bartlett was, like Suckling, privy chamberman to the King.

18. Sir John Vaughan (1603-1674), Selden's friend, and later chief justice of the common-pleas.

18. Endymion Porter (1587-1649), royalist, friend and patron of poets.

22. The fact that Jonson entitled the 1616 folio of his plays his *Works* caused considerable comment (cf. Marston, ed. Bullen, i. p. lvii). With this whole passage, cf. Howell's letter to Sir Thomas Hawkins, April 5, 1636 (ed. Jacobs, p. 403).

PAGE 191. 9. Jonson's play, *The New Inn*, was acted in 1629, and published in 1631.

10. Thomas Carew (1598?-1639?).

27. Davenant lost his nose as the result of a disease acquired during his residence in France. This was a frequent source of jest among the wits; cf. S. Sheppard, *Epigrams*, 1651, p. 39:

'To the most excellent Poet, Sir William Davenant.

What though some shallow Sciolists dare prate,  
And scoffing thee, *Apollo* nauseate;

What *Venus* hath snatch'd from thee cruelly  
*Minerva* with advantage doth supply:  
*Johnson* is dead, let *Sherly* stoope to Fate,  
 And thou alone art Poet Laureate.'

PAGE 192. 5. Sir Tobie Matthew (1577-1655), writer, courtier, and diplomatist.

8. Lucy Hay, Countess of Carlisle (1599-1660), for some time the reigning beauty at court: a 'character' of her is included in Sir Tobie Matthew's *Collection of Letters*, 1660.

25. Walter Montagu (1603?-1677), son of the first Earl of Manchester: his pastoral comedy, *The Shepherd's Paradise* (1629), was privately acted before Charles I by the Queen and her ladies of honour. The charge of unintelligibility seems to have been generally made against it; according to some commendatory verses prefixed to it,

'at least good manners sayes,  
 They first should understand it ere dispraise.'

PAGE 193. 2. *Little Cid*, i. e. Sidney Godolphin (1610-1643).

5. The allusion is probably to William Murray, Earl of Dysart (1600?-1651), then gentleman of the King's bedchamber.

7. The 'ever memorable' John Hales (1584-1656), fellow of Eton, 1612-49; his *Golden Remaines* appeared in 1659. His famous commendation of Shakespeare ('there was no subject of which any poet ever writ but he would produce it much better treated of in Shakespeare,' Ker's *Essays of Dryden*, i. 80) was uttered in the presence of Suckling: cf. Gildon, *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays*, 1694, p. 85 sq.

10. Lucius Cary, second Viscount Falkland (1610?-1643).

## JOHN MILTON (1608-1674)

PAGE 194. 1. *This manner of writing*, i. e. theological and political polemics in prose.

PAGE 195. 21. Ariosto, at the time of the inception of the *Orlando Furioso*, is said to have been urged by Cardinal Bembo (1470-1547) not to forsake Latin for the vernacular: the story, often repeated, was first reported by G. B. Pigna, *I Romanzi*,

*nei quali della poesia e della vita dell' Ariosto con nuovo modo si tratta*, Venice, 1554, p. 73.

PAGE 196. 33. David Pareus, originally Waengler (1548-1622), a German scholar whose biblical commentaries were much in vogue among the Calvinists; his exegetical writings were collected in two vols. folio, Frankfurt, 1628.

PAGE 202. 19-24. This is a paraphrase of Strabo, *Geog.* i. 2, 5; cf. *supra*, 12. 14 sq. and note.

PAGE 203. 13. Cf. Plato, *Rep.* ii. 377 sq.

PAGE 204. 16 sq. Milton's adversary, Joseph Hall, Bishop of Exeter and Norwich (1574-1656), had in youth written the first formal satires in English—three books of 'toothless satires' in 1597, followed by three books of 'biting satires' in 1598—and these Milton now proceeds to criticize.

21. From Hall's prefatory 'Defiance to Envy': 'Or scourge the rusted swordes of elvish knights,' referring to Spenser.

24. Hall, *Satires*, i. 1:

'Nor ever could my scornful Muse abide  
With tragic shoes her ankles for to hide.'

27 sq. Hall's seventh (not sixth) satire of book ii represents the signs of the Zodiac as twelve inns in the high-street of heaven: the names of the taverns and of the thoroughfare (Bridge Street) are derived from those in Cambridge; and the astrologers, who are in attendance, are hostlers, tapsters, and chamberlains.

PAGE 205. 2. Hall, *Satires*, prol. to bk. i:

'I first adventure; follow me who list,  
And be the second English satirist.'

7 sq. *Satyr* . . . was borne out of a Tragedy. Cf. Horace, *A. P.* 220 sq.

13. *Bull*. The word in this sense had acquired sudden popularity about this time; cf. Robert Chamberlaine's *Booke of Bulls*, 1636, and *A New Booke of Mistakes, or Bulls with Tales and Bulls without Tales*, 1637.

PAGE 206. 16. Lodovico Castelvetro (1505-1571), Italian scholar and critic: his elaborate commentary on Aristotle's *Poetics*, published at Vienna in 1570, contains the first formu-

lation of the dramatic unities; cf. Saintsbury, *Hist. of Crit.* ii. 80-89, and A. Fusco, *La Poetica di L. Castelvetro*, Naples, 1904.

16. The critical works of Tasso consist chiefly of his two *Discorsi* on epic poetry, dialogues, and letters: there is a convenient collection of the more important by C. Guasti, *Prose diverse di Torquato Tasso*, Florence, 1875.

16. Giacomo Mazzoni (1548-1598), author of the *Discorso in difesa della Commedia del divino poeta Dante*, 1573 (cf. Saintsbury, ii. 105). This passage is quoted with approval by Charles Gildon, in the preface to his *Complete Art of Poetry*, 1718.

PAGE 207, 8. Unrhymed classical metres were employed by the Italians as early as the fifteenth century (cf. Carducci, *La Poesia barbara nei secoli xv e xvi*, Bologna, 1881), but Trissino introduced blank verse (*versi sciolti*) as the epic metre in his *Italia Liberata* (1547-8). In Spain, blank verse was first used by Boscan, in a poem on Hero and Leander, and by Garcilasso de la Vega, in an epistle to Boscan (1543), and ten years later it was used by Gonzalvo Perez in a partial version of the *Odyssey* which is referred to in Ascham's *Scholemaster* (1570). Milton here seems to echo some of Ascham's phrases (Gregory Smith, *Eliz. Crit. Essays*, i. 29-34).

19-21. Surrey had used blank verse in his translation of the second and fourth books of the *Aeneid* (written before 1547, published in 1557), but no formal English epic had been written in that metre before *Paradise Lost*.

24. Aristotle, *Poet.* vi. 2: δι' ἐλέου καὶ φόβου περαίνουσα τὴν τῶν τοιούτων παθημάτων κάθαρσιν.

PAGE 207. 26-208. 3. Milton, in explaining the Aristotelian *katharsis*, seems to follow Minturno, *Arte Poetica*, Venice, 1564, p. 77: 'Nè più forza haura il Physico di spengere il feruido ueleno della infermità, che 'l corpo afflige, con la uelenosa medicina, che 'l Tragico di purgar l'animo delle impetuose perturbationi con lo empito degli affetti in uersi leggiadramente espressi' (cf. my *Lit. Crit. in the Ren.* p. 79 sq., and Bywater, 'Milton and the Aristotelian Definition of Tragedy,' in *Journal of Philology*, 1900, xxvii. 267).

PAGE 208. 7. Cf. *supra*, 118. 8. This 'verse of Euripides' is also ascribed to Menander.



19. The tragedy of *Χριστὸς πάσχων* (first printed at Rome in 1542) is no longer attributed to Gregory Nazianzen (c. 329-c. 389).

30. Latin tragedy, unlike Latin comedy, had no 'prologue' in the modern sense; among the Greeks (Aristotle, *Poet.* xii) the prologue was that part of tragedy which preceded the entrance of the chorus. Martial prefixed a prose *Epistola ad Lectorem* to the first book of his Epigrams.

PAGE 209. 1. Italian tragedy employed the chorus throughout the sixteenth century (e.g. Trissino's *Sofonisba*, 1515, Giral di Cintio's *Orbecche*, 1541, Tasso's *Torrismondo*, 1586), and continued to employ it during the seventeenth (e.g. Adreini's *Adamo*, 1613, Chiabrera's *Angelica in Ebuda*, 1615, Dottori's *Aristodemo*, 1657).

4-13. *Monostrophic*, *Apolelymenon*, and *Allæostropha*, terms of Greek prosody employed by Milton to explain the metrical structure of the choruses in *Samson Agonistes*, are rendered by Masson, respectively, as 'single-stanzaed' (i.e. without the division into Strophe, Antistrophe, and Epodos), 'released from the restraint of any particular measure' (i.e. each line is of any metre that the poet likes), and 'divers-stanzaed' (i.e. the strophic arrangement, whenever there is any, is different in each stanza).

24. The only 'antient rule' for the unity of time is Aristotle's casual reference (*Poet.* v. 4): cf. *infra*, note to ii. 108. 30.

## APPENDIX

PAGE 210. 1. The text follows that of D. Laing's edition, *Notes of Ben Jonson's Conversations with William Drummond of Hawthornden, January, MDCXIX*, published by the Shakespeare Society in 1842. All (and only) passages of a strictly critical character have been included.

6, 7. Thomas Campion's *Observations in the Art of English Poesie*, 1602, and Samuel Daniel's answer, *A Defence of Ryme*, 1603, are reprinted in Gregory Smith's *Elizabethan Critical Essays*.

8-12. Cf. *infra*, ii. 19. 9 sq.

16. Martial, x. 47.

19. On the Horatian rule of 'decorum' (*A.P.* 114 sq., 156 sq.), which became an inflexible law in neo-classical criticism, see my *Lit. Crit. in the Ren.* pp. 85-89.

PAGE 211. 9-11. Jonson means that, when he had written his commendatory epigram for the 1605 edition of Sylvester's *Du Bartas*, he had not understood French sufficiently to judge of the merits of the translation. His objections to the work of Sylvester, Fairfax, Harington, and Du Perron are really fundamental: as an advocate of literal translation, he was wholly out of sympathy with the school of poetic paraphrase.

12. The allusion is apparently to Chapman's *Iliad* (1598 sq.) and Phaer and Twyne's *Aeneid* (1558-73), both written in lines of fourteen syllables.

28-29. Edward Sharpham (*fl.* 1607); Thomas Dekker (1570?-1641?); John Minsheu (*fl.* 1617).

30. Abraham Fraunce's *The Countesse of Pembrokes Yuychurch*, 1591-2.

35. Jonson here raises the old controversy whether the true poet should or should not invent his own plot: Du Bartas derived the material of his *Semaines* from the Scriptures.

PAGE 212. 1. Cf. *supra*, 210. 19. Sidney, on the other hand, objected to the use of rustic language in pastoral poetry (Gregory Smith, i. 196).

5. *Bonefonius*, i.e. Jean Bonnefons (1554-1614): his *Pancharis*, a collection of erotic poems after the manner of the *Basia* of Joannes Secundus, concludes with a poem entitled *Pervigilium Veneris*.

6. Cardinal du Perron (1558-1618) made a very free translation of the first and fourth books of the *Aeneid*: cf. note on 211. 9-11, *supra*.

10. *He*, i.e. Jonson: this is Drummond's own comment. Jonson's French and Italian seemed to the master of Hawthornden, widely read in the modern languages, much the same as Shakespeare's 'small Latin and less Greek' seemed to Ben himself.

12. Cf. *supra*, 10. 16, 17, and *infra*, 214. 29-31.

19. *Epitaphe of the Prince*, i.e. *Teares on the Death of Meliades*, 1613.

24. *Forth Feasting*, written on the King's visit to Scotland, 1617.

27. In the printed versions of the *Calm*, these words appear as:—

‘And in one place lay  
Feathers and dust, to-day and yesterday.’

30. This refers to Sir Henry (not Edward) Wotton's *Character of a Happy Life*.

PAGE 213. 10-12. John Selden's *Titles of Honour* appeared in 1614, and his *De Diis Syris* in 1617.

15. This was Milton's opinion (*Mansus*, 78-84, *Epit. Dam.* 155-78) and Dryden's (*Essays*, ed. Ker, ii. 38, 272), but Blackmore's laborious epics, *Prince Arthur* and *King Arthur*, were the only illustrations in actual practice during the century.

25. *Winter's Tale*, iii. 3; acted in 1611, but not as yet printed when Jonson condemned it.

30. John Owen (1560?-1622): his Latin epigrams were collected in 1624. Cf. *supra*, 211. 17.

PAGE 214. 11. These are the opening lines of Sir John Davies's *Orchestra*, 1596:

‘Where liues the man that neuer yet did heare  
Of chaste Penelope, Ulisses Queene?’

16-18. This is Drummond's comment; Jonson seems to have a similar objection in mind in the prologue to the *Sad Shepherd*:

‘But here's an Heresie of late let fall,  
That Mirth by no meanes fits a *Pastorall* . . .  
But that no stile for *Pastorall* should goe  
Current, but what is stamp'd with *Ah* and *O*,  
Who judgeth so may singularly erre,  
As if all *Poesie* had one Character,’ &c.

The historic Italian controversy on the nature of the pastoral, occasioned by the *Pastor Fido*, is described by Marsan, *La Pastorale dramatique en France*, 1905, pp. 58-66.

PAGE 215. 5. This refers to Sir Henry Savile's version, 1591; but Jonson, in an epigram addressed to Savile, had expressed a quite different opinion:

'The soul of Tacitus

In thee, most weighty Savile, lived to us.'

Cf. note on 211. 9-11, *supra*.

17. The text of this 'character' follows the folio ed. of Drummond's *Works*, Edinburgh, 1711, p. 226. Cf. Masson's *William Drummond of Hawthornden*, p. 80 sq.

28. The orig. reads: 'Constable saith, some have written excellently.'

28. This apparently refers to Sir David Murray of Gorthy, but he had already published *The Tragicall Death of Sophonisba and Cælia*, 1611.

PAGE 216. 2. *Delia*, sonnet xl.

4. *Astrophel and Stella*, sonnet xv.

21-23. Sannazaro, *Arcadia*, ed. Scherillo, p. 88, and Ronsard, *Amours de Marie*. Cf. A. Graf, *Attraverso il Cinquecento*, 1888, pp. 8, 9.

PAGE 217. 1-3. *Song, Marry and Love*, i.e. Donne's second Elegy, 'The Anagram.' Tasso's *Stanzas against Beauty*, i.e. 'Stanze sopra la Bellezza', in *Opere*, ed. Rosini, iv. 151.

20. Thomas Hudson's version of the *Judith* of Du Bartas appeared in 1584, and was later reprinted with the translations of Sylvester.

23. *5th Book*. Orig. '8th Book.'

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